

BEING ABOUT GOD'S BUSINESS: A FAITH-BASED
EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT
THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

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The overarching objective of this project is to enhance the economic empowerment of the residents within this community of Amelia, Virginia. The methodology that will be used to test the aforementioned hypothesis will be primarily qualitative in scope and orientation. Through our educational endeavors, those who were participants in this project proposal become more aware of the empowerment assessable through entrepreneurship and or express a new found conviction to become entrepreneurs. Based upon the finding of this project, it was concluded that is a viable education model for economic development and empowerment.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the God who never ceased to be my God, my father who never ceased to exemplify the Father, my mother who never ceased to provide the nurture of a mother, my wife who never ceased to stand by my side as a wife, and to my three children: H.B. Sampson IV, Terri Angelique, and Tiffany Nicole who have unceasingly given greater scope, meaning, and joy to my life.

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INTRODUCTION

It was 2002 when the film titled “Barber Shop,” was released and swept through the American pop-culture. For all intents and purposes, this film attempted to both express the lack of appreciation for entrepreneurship within the African American community and to stimulate its African American viewers to reflectively rediscover its vital significance.

In “Barber Shop,” Ice Cube’s character whose name is Calvin becomes the recipient of his deceased father’s barber shop. Calvin, though ambitious, is young, inexperienced, and looking for something other than his father’s business as a means of economic security and liberation. In an effort to change his stars so to speak, Calvin sells his business to a neighborhood predator in the person of Mr. Wallace for Forty Thousand Dollars. After selling his business to Mr. Wallace he discovers that he has made a horrible mistake and attempts to give the money back to Mr. Wallace and regain both his family’s legacy and his entrepreneurial freedom.

Of particular interest is the scene where Calvin is faced with telling the other barbers in his employ of his *faux pas* after a rather heated discussion with Eddie. Calvin walks into the barbershop and begins to inform all of the other barbers about having sold the barbershop to Mr. Wallace. The over all sentiment and response of the barbers seems to register in the form of the single question, “how could you do this?” It is during this dialogue and in response to this question that Calvin makes the statement, “I did not know

what I had.” This one line was the hinge upon which the entire movie hung and the epitome of the African American community’s assessment of entrepreneurship.

Like Calvin, many in the African American community have lost sight of the rich legacy of economic empowerment through entrepreneurship. To be sure, those in the black community do want to have economic well-being, but have sought to accomplish this end in ways other than that of entrepreneurship. It is almost as if the black community became blind to the economic power available through entrepreneurship by looking for “a better way of life.”

For many, this “better way of life” was indicative of being free from the restrictions of segregation. What was not foreseen was the adverse effect that integration would have on the black community’s economic structure and business entrepreneurship. Prior to integration, the African American community had a rich history of entrepreneurship. However, desegregation seems to have eroded the presence of entrepreneurs in the black community to the extent that an ethos of entrepreneurship within the contemporary African American community has become marginal at best.¹ In other words, though some would correctly argue that much of our black legacy has been stolen,² we apparently fought to give the legacy of black entrepreneurship away.

It is with this in mind that the movie “Barber Shop” sought to convey to the black community the importance of regaining its legacy of entrepreneurship as a means of economic empowerment. As this is the message that is shared in the “Barber Shop,” so it is in the case of this treatise.

¹ E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie* (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 1957), 144.

² G. James, *Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy* (Trenton, NJ: First African Press, Inc., 1992).

This work seeks to assist in the rediscovery of entrepreneurship as a viable means of economic development and empowerment. According to Eddie Spencer, there is no real freedom without entrepreneurship. To be sure, if we as a people are going to be truly free from the structure of economic oppression, we must become more aware of the liberation and freedom that is assessable through entrepreneurship in general and business entrepreneurship in particular. By regaining an appropriate appreciation for entrepreneurship, we should be more empowered individually while also strengthening the economic base of the community.

For this reason, we shall investigate the potential of a faith-based educational initiative for economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship. The author's attempt to share the potential of this model for economic uplift begins in chapter one with his spiritual journey, the demographic information of the author's ministerial context, and the nexus and or synergy that reveal God's divine plan as a result of bringing the author and his context together. Said differently, this chapter seeks to "blow God's cover" as it pertains to His plans for the author's ministry in this particular context. After discussing this vital information, chapter two then seeks to provide the theoretical state of the art in this regard. Next, chapter three shares the biblical, theological, and historical foundation for a paradigm of economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship. Next, chapter four shares the research methodology and design used by the author to test the effectiveness of an educational model for entrepreneurship as a means of economic empowerment. Chapter five follows with the data compiled from the research design model and the findings afforded thereby. Finally, Chapter six offers the reflection, summary, and conclusion of this overall body of work along with suggestions for future implementation.

Having offered this brief adumbration of the ensuing treatise, let us now examine this faith-based educational initiative for economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship in more detail. We begin with the author's spiritual journey.

CHAPTER ONE

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, CONTEXT, AND SYNERGY

As with all things existential, there must be a beginning. Therefore, in this first chapter, we shall begin this treatise by examining the spiritual journey of H.B. Sampson, III, hereafter referred to as H.B. Then, we will direct our attention to the contextual analysis of his ministry context. After walking through his spiritual journey and examining his ministry context, we shall uncover the divine synergy that exists as a nexus between who H.B. has become as a result of his spiritual journey and what the needs are of the community within his ministry context. Now, let us begin our walk with H.B through his spiritual journey.

Spiritual Autobiography

Upon a considerable amount of both thoughtful and prayerful reflection, H.B. has arrived at the realization that his spiritual journey has been one that bespeaks just how good God is to those He loves. There is little question in his mind that God is worthy to be praised for all of the wonderful things that he has done in his life. As with any story, it must be told from the perspective of one's current experience. Therefore, this is H.B.'s attempt to share his spiritual journey with God hitherto.

A Miraculous Conception

H.B. recalls the story that has been recounted in his hearing for most of his conscious life. It was one that his mother told him so that he would never forget the circumstances from which he had come. His mother told him of a time during her childhood when she was in a small town in Texas.

While riding on the back of a wagon one day and against her mother's directive, she decided to sit on the top of one of the wagon's sides. As the wagon rolled down the road, it hit a bump and his mother inadvertently fell over the side of the wagon and into the path of one of its wheels.

The fear of the oncoming wagon seemed to paralyze her as a million images raced through her mind for a few seconds that seemed like an eternity. She finally seemed to come to herself and attempted to lift her body from the imminent slough of the wagon. As she tried to lurch forward in an effort to remove herself from this dangerous situation, she soon discovered that she was too late. Her body, lying perpendicular to the wagon wheel's path, was rolled over before the driver could bring it to a halt. Having heard her child's voice in urgent agony and realizing that her daughter had fallen from the wagon, his grandmother leaped down from her seat to the ground and discovered her daughter lying underneath the wagon. As she raced to her daughter's aid, she noticed an imprint from one of the wheels pressed across the midsection of her child's body.

She immediately grabbed her daughter and, in frantic gestures, sought to see if she was still alive. To her relief, her daughter gradually regained air into her lungs, but there still remained the matter of this little girl's physical state after having had her midsection apparently crushed underneath the wheel of a wagon. His grandmother, now trying to see

if her daughter could still walk, gingerly lifted her daughter up and to her joyful surprise found that she could still move her legs and walk. It was unknown to either of them that this event would come back to haunt this little girl later in life.

Years went by and his mother moved to Houston, Texas with his grandmother where she later met and married his father. Two years into their marriage, they seemed unable to have any children and his mother often wondered if her reproductive system had been injured by her childhood misfortune. In an attempt to uncover whether she was going to be able to have any children, his mother went to a doctor who seemed to be a pleasant and well-intentioned person. Unfortunately, for all of this doctor's well-intentions and pleasant demeanor, his prognosis was that she would probably not be able to have any children.

His mother told his father and her father-in-law, who was a Baptist pastor, the dire news from the doctor's office, which expressed the likelihood that she would not be able to bear a child. It is then that H.B.'s grandfather told his mother the words that echoed an eternal sentiment. He told her, "you need to get a second opinion."

I think that a portion of his grandfather's resolve reflected his own personal experience with the son to whom his daughter-in-law was married. Although he was a healthy strapping young man at the time of their marriage, this was not always the case. During his younger years, H.B.'s father was an extremely ill little boy. He had a severe case of asthma that restricted him to his bed while other children his age were running around outside playing. His condition was so bad that he could not take fifteen steps without an ensuing shortness of breath. H.B.'s grandparents repeatedly took his father to the doctor, but he seemed to be unable to help his condition.

Then, one day the doctor told them that maybe their child's condition would improve if they took him to a higher climate. At this suggestion, they loaded his father into the car and drove to a higher climate, but this was just another wasted trip. Greatly dejected, they drove back to Houston wondering if their eldest child was going to survive his childhood. They arrived home and took him into his room where they laid him down on the bed.

Later that night, H.B.'s grandparents decided that the doctor was right about taking his father to a higher elevation, but that he was wrong about the geographical location. So, that night they went into his father's room, got down on their knees around his bed, and took his father to the higher climate of heaven. In that moment, they sought a second opinion from a doctor that has never lost a patient. His father never had another asthma attack and he is still alive to tell the story. The doctor that said that he would not live to become grown has gone to his reward, but his father grew up to become an adult and to have a productive life.

H.B. could just see his grandfather looking at his father as the grown man that doctors said he would not become. He can just see his grandfather listening to both of his parents' report from the doctor's office as he remembered a time when he had received a negative report about the issue of his own child's life. Then he can see his grandfather recalling how he had to seek a second opinion from the hallowed halls of heaven, which resulted in the healing of his child's body. Armed with this memory from his own experience, H.B. can both hear the power and feel the gravity of the words that his grandfather spoke to his mother and father when he said to them, "you need to seek a second opinion."

Being a woman of faith, his mother took this advice from her father-in-law and started seeking a second opinion. She began praying the prayer of Hannah and told the Lord that if he would give her a child she would give that child back to Him. She prayed this prayer a few years, in concert with his father, and finally one day the Lord answered their prayers and blessed his mother to be found with child. Nine months later, she gave birth to a baby boy whom they both named Harry B. Sampson, III.

For all intents and purposes, he was a miracle. Without question, his spiritual journey began before he was born and sprang from the union of an unlikely couple. It began with a little girl who was run over by a wagon resulting in the prognosis that she would not be able to bear children and a little boy who had asthma so bad that he was not expected to live long enough to get grown. Thank God, however, that his parents sought a second opinion from the divine and made room for God.

The Conversion

He was born February 14, 1969 and had a fairly ordinary childhood until, at the age of four, when he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior. He still remembers it as clearly as if it had happened yesterday. It was a first Sunday night; his father had just completed the sermon and extended the invitation to discipleship just before the communion. As always, he sat there next to his mother, but this first Sunday night was different from the others.

This particular first Sunday night, he decided that he wanted to be saved. He got up from the pew under the dimmed lighting of the sanctuary and sought to move around his mother's knees. To his surprise, his mother did not move to let him pass. He tried again to get around his mother's knees, but to no avail. Apparently, his mother assumed

that he was just trying to get out of his seat and venture around the church, which was absolutely out of the question during the moment of invitation.

However, he was undaunted and continued to persist in his attempt to make it to the middle aisle. At this point, all he wanted to do was to get to the front of the church and give God his life. After a considerable amount of pushing, his mother asked him what he wanted. He told her that he wanted to go and join the church. Upon realizing the nature of his intentions, she moved her legs to the side and let him pass. He stepped out into the aisle and walked to the front of the church where his father stood. He accepted Christ as his savior that night and he has been in relationship with God from that day forward.

Getting the Call

It would be five more years before he felt the pull of ministerial destiny on his life. At the age of nine, he realized that he was called to be a minister like his father. Needless to say, this was a bit much to handle for a nine years old child, but the authenticity of the call was unmistakable and its intensity appeared to grow with each passing day. The overshadowing presence of God's hand on his life seemed to be ubiquitous.

He was not quite ready to become a minister like his father and uncles so he resisted the call of ministry with every fiber of his being. He ran from doing God's will by attempting to submerge himself in all sorts of activities that he believed to be the most antithetical to God's design for his life. So unwavering was his commitment to disobeying the voice of God that he aspired to be the best that he could possibly become in ungodly activities. One might say that the slogan, "be all you can be [in the world]" was his mantra of resistance to the divine's will.

What appeared to be lost on him was the fact that no matter how far you run from God it is never far enough to get away from God. The lunacy of trying to run away from one who is everywhere just did not seem to register. In retrospect, the notion of trying to elude one who sees and knows everything is without question one of the most futile enterprises that one could undertake. His senseless pursuit of separation from his destiny was curtailed at the age of seventeen. At this point, the Lord showed him that his will must be done. He found himself unable to refuse God any further. With tears streaming down his face, he walked to the front of the same church in which he accepted Christ some thirteen years earlier and confessed before heaven and earth his acceptance of God's call to preach the gospel.

For the next two years, however, he fought God on the terms of his agreement to preach. In his mind, he was fulfilling his part of the agreement with God by both accepting the call to preach and preaching when it was necessary. Of course, the result was that he was in ministry, but ministry was not in him. He was a preacher without having a desire to preach in him. More to the point, he felt that he had done enough and that now God should leave him alone and let him do some of the other things he wanted to do. He spent two years trying to renegotiate the terms of his ministry with God not realizing that God was using these two years to orientate him to his destiny.

The Awakening

Something happened in 1989 that sounded the trumpet of transition. In 1989, just two years after his accepting the call to ministry, his father was called to pastor a church in Seattle, Washington. He accompanied him, along with the rest of the family, to Seattle where the next step in his ministerial journey began.

While in Seattle, the desire to do ministry began to replace his dread of doing ministry. He started studying various theologians, which in turn seemed to awaken within him an insatiable thirst to know more about God. He could not seem to read, learn, or discover enough about the Lord. It seemed like the more he found out about Him, the more there was to know about Him. He studied about God both inside Christianity and outside of Christianity. He was on an unrelenting quest to know the divine.

He soon discovered, however, that God was a huge topic of discussion and, in the presence of so many different opinions, he became increasingly distraught about the validity of Christianity. He can recall being in a tremendous quandary about whether or not what he had come to accept as being true about Christ and Christianity was actually true at all. At one point he almost wished that he had never become aware of the other world's religions, which seemed to both predate and to have stark similarities to Christianity.

It seemed that for every thing that he thought was authentically Christianity there was another version of the same theology, doctrine, or creed from some other religion. He felt as though he was being torn apart from the inside out. Then, one day he came to a realization that seemed to absolve him of his concerns and release him from his doubts. While in the throes of trying to resist his doubt and argue away his fears, he came to the conclusion that the only thing that mattered was what he believed.

He decided that, regardless of what the other religions may seem to have in common with Christianity, all of the internal anguish and pain regarding his faith came down to what he chose to believe. He knows that it seems very simplistic, but sometimes the most profound insights are those that are simple in nature. When he came to the realization that he could choose to believe in Christ and continue to subscribe to

Christianity in spite of all of the bodies of literature that seemed to undermine their validity, he gained a new appreciation for the meaning of faith.

At this point in his spiritual walk with God, he felt that God was teaching him that faith is not belief in the absence of contradiction, but rather that real faith is believing in the presence of contradiction. This was a new level of understanding faith in his life.

While in Seattle, he discovered that his faith was not invalidated by doubt, but rather that it was authenticated by his doubt. This was one of the most important gifts that God gave to H.B. while seeking to know more about Him in Seattle.

Another gift that God gave him in Seattle was that of meeting his future wife. He can remember when he first started dating his wife, one of her aunts, who was not in favor of him dating her niece, told his mother that he probably should not date her niece because she could not have any children. He still cannot fathom this woman telling his mother that she should encourage him not to become serious about his wife because she did not want him to date her niece.

Ironically enough, his wife's Aunt did not know his mother's story. She did not know that those same words were once said about his mother many years before. She did not know that he was the child of a woman who was run over by a wagon and who had received the prognosis that she would not be able to bear children. This woman had no idea that he was a child of faith and that he also believed in the power of God to provide a second opinion.

He still marvels at the hand of God bringing him together with one whose situation was so similar to the one out of which he was birthed. He married his wife in August of 1998 and approximately three weeks later they moved to Richmond, Virginia. It was not an easy move to make and they had a lot of struggles along the way. He can truly say that

all that they have accomplished has been by the grace of God. Things were so difficult initially that he wanted to wait a few years before trying to have a child. His wife agreed and they waited until they were better able to afford children. They waited a few years, but it seemed that the more they waited until they had all that they needed to raise a child, the more out of reach those necessary resources seemed to become.

A Thanksgiving to Remember

Finally, after their second year of marriage, they decided that they would try to have a child, even though they did not have the money that they thought they needed. They made the decision to step out on faith and trust God to do the rest. Needless to say, as the man of the house, H.B. was really concerned, but he came to believe that God would meet their needs as he had already done so many times before. Therefore, they started trying to have their first child. They tried to get pregnant for what must have been approximately two years, but seemingly to no avail.

Then, he never will forget, one Tuesday night his wife started having some sharp abdominal pains. They drove to the hospital and discovered that they were pregnant. They were elated, but it was short lived. The next words that the doctor told them was that his wife's sharp pain was due to the embryo being lodged in one of her tubes, which resulted in her having a miscarriage.

Can you imagine trying to get pregnant for two years, going to the hospital for something that seemed to be unrelated, finding out that you are pregnant, and then hearing that you are in the process of miscarrying the child? Without question, both he and his wife were devastated. He felt as though God had just dealt them one of the cruelest blows he could have ever mustered, but he was wrong.

To make matters worse, it occurred on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. He went home and tried to prepare the thanksgiving message, but he repeatedly found his mind wondering back to the place where a question kept demanding an answer. The question was, “why would God do this, this way, and at this time of the year?” Why would God do this to us? How can we be thankful during this thanksgiving season?

After this ordeal, they found Thanksgiving to be accompanied with a new memory of both pain and loss. Although they ultimately determined that God knew what he was doing, it did not make the loss of their child any less real. They resolved to continue trying to have a child and they did so for another two years. With each passing year, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day became more difficult and each month was initially filled with hope and later dashed with despair. As time went on, he began to dread seeing the look on his wife’s face when nature once again proved their inability to be productive.

Furthermore, even though he tried not to show it, he too was becoming increasingly desperate, despondent, and disappointed. He found himself for the first time ever actually considering the idea that maybe God would not bless them the way he thought that God would. Once this idea began to ferment, he began to realize how much his life’s motivation was predicated on having children.

He then started asking himself a question that he never knew he was capable of asking. He asked himself, “Without a child, what is the real meaning of life? What will motivate me to succeed beyond this point? What is the point of trying to achieve great heights in life if there are not any children to benefit from my accomplishments?” These questions seemed to call out to him everyday with increasing intensity. Yet, he got to that place where he said, “Evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, I believe.” Yes, he was able to find some solace in the fact that God had already shown him that faith does not

exist in the absence of doubt, but rather in the presence of doubt. Nevertheless, the comfort he found in this reality of faith was becoming more and more difficult to manage due to the extended absence of his faith being realized. Though discouraged, however, they still continued to carry their concerns to the higher heights of heaven and awaited a second opinion from God.

A Double Portion

While they waited, not knowing what God was going to do, he and his wife decided that they would begin to focus on another need, which was to acquire better living accommodations. They found a house that was both local to their places of employment and their ministry context. It was a four-bedroom house that they converted into a three-bedroom home in order to have a bigger space for his study. After a considerable amount of prayer, they started the paper work for the house they had been praying about and looked forward to the day that they would be able to close. They were definitely ready to move out of their current living quarters and into their own home. Little did they know that the steps that they were taking to acquire a home would be the beginning of God's movement in other areas of their lives.

Halfway through the process of their stepping out on faith and buying their first home, his wife came home and informed him that a pregnancy test, which she had just taken, proved to be positive for their being pregnant. It was amazing to both of them to receive this news, especially in light of the fact that they had pretty much given up. They were both cautiously excited and trying to maintain their composure until they went to the doctor's office for the official test results. Happily, they found that the doctor's test the following week was consistent with the results they had received a week earlier.

They printed pictures of the sonogram that showed their new baby in its embryonic form. Then, due to their time restraints, they scheduled another appointment with the doctor when they could come back and take all of the other tests for the baby in order to make sure that everything was all right. For the next week or so, they were on cloud nine. At every opportunity, H.B. found himself looking at this picture of their little baby and thinking how blessed they were.

They went back to the doctor's office a week or two later and another sonogram was performed. He remembers looking at the screen as the nurse showed them their little one on the screen. Then something strange happened. The camera seemed to go in and out of focus. He was looking at the screen and thinking to himself, "That looks a little strange." She kept moving the camera and it seemed to happen again. Seemingly, the camera went in and out of focus three times before she decided to ask his wife a question. She asked, "didn't you say that you just had a sonogram a week or two ago?" His wife responded, "Yes." The woman then asked his wife, "Well, did you forget to tell me something?"

At this point, he seemed to intuitively sense what the woman was implying and he asked her, "Is that what it looks like?" She then told him "Yes! There is not one baby, but two babies. You all are going to have twins!" They could not believe it. For the first time in his life he could understand what it feels like when someone says that they cannot feel their legs. He came dangerously close to falling out in the middle of the floor. All he could think about was getting a seat to sit down before he fell down. He is still in amazement at the lessons that God has taught him through this experience. The facts of this event and their implications are unmistakable. They did not get pregnant again until they decided to

step out on faith and purchase a home with more rooms than they needed. What an awesome lesson to learn about the divine.

He has discovered that one of the lessons that God wanted to teach him was that sometimes He wants to bless us, but He is waiting for us to step out on faith and make room for Him. H.B. remembers telling his mother, “What an awesome way to learn this principle.”

Another lesson that came to light for him in this experience was the reality of God’s restorative works in the lives of his people. God showed him that even though they lost one child earlier, He was able to restore unto them all that they had lost before. In a very real way, H.B. has seen God teach him that He can give you back, as some would say, “Double for your trouble.”

Just imagine, twins in the womb of a woman who was not supposed to be able to have children, which was the same diagnosis his mother received thirty-four years ago before he was born. He cannot begin to express how overwhelming this experience is in light of the events surrounding his own conception. He now sees that the story of faith that began with his parents has now quite literally become the testimony of the next generation. God is awesome!

As he reflects upon the unfolding of his life’s story, he must say that God has truly blown his mind. He now sees that every aspect of his life has been about the second opinions of God that are found in His divine presence. What a wonderful thing it is to know that God works miracles in the lives of his people when they seek a second opinion from heaven about their condition and make room for God to be a blessing. Even more than this, H.B. find it comforting to know that, although one may suffer losses in life, when they seek a second opinion from God and make room for him to work a miracle in their

lives, God will restore unto them what they have lost and give them “double for our troubles.” Hallelujah!

Contextual Analysis

The path of H.B.’s ministry has led him to become the pastor of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Amelia, Virginia. In light of God’s having placed H.B. in this particular place of ministry, it is essential that he examine the context within which God has sent him to serve. By analyzing this community and the various aspect of its composition, H.B. should be better equipped to understand the nexus that must necessarily exists between his ministry and the needs of the community within which he has been providentially placed by the divine. For this reason, H.B. will attempt to convey several features of both his church and its community in an effort to formulate an understanding of what God has called him to do in this particular place of ministerial service.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church

Pleasant Grove Baptist church had its beginning approximately 14 years after the Civil War. At this time, a woman by the name of Mrs. Harper along with several missionaries from ‘the north’ came to the community to both teach and educate freed slaves. Classes were first taught in homes of a few interested families. News of the work of the missionaries spread rapidly and the numbers of interested persons grew so large that is was no longer possible to accommodate them in their homes. Therefore, a log cabin was constructed and for many years this building was called “The Schoolhouse.” During the week, reading, writing, and arithmetic was taught, while on Sundays this same group of

people conducted Sunday school and church services under the leadership of Rev. Alfred Morris and Rev. Daniel Miles.

Mrs. Harper purchased an acre of land to build a Presbyterian church, but the group of people who had been meeting on Sundays wanted to expand their interest in a Baptist church, which prompted one of its members by the name of Mrs. Clarindo Twine to donate one half an acre to build a Baptist church. The land having been donated for the purposes of building a Baptist Church, these people organized this church in 1879.

Because the location of the land that was donated was located among spreading oaks and beautiful surroundings, the church was name "Pleasant Grove." A deed was made on the first day of February 1880 and one half an acre of land was conveyed to the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. Subsequently, the first church building was erected under the leadership of Rev. H. Taylor.

There were numerous other early pastors that served this congregation for relative brief periods of time until October 13, 1923 when Rev. T. H. Jones was elected as the new pastor of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. He served as the pastor of this church until April of 1938. It was during his tenure that another half an acre was purchased and the construction of the present church building began. Rev. B.F. Cooper and Rev. Warren A Evans succeeded Rev. Jones. After these predecessors, Rev. F. N. Nunn was elected as the new pastor and served in that capacity for twelve years.

After Rev. F.N. Nunn, Pleasant Grove entered another phase of sporadic leadership until 1958 when they called Rev. Gordon and Rev. Mims respectively who each provided pastoral leadership to this congregation for the ensuing decade. Following Rev. Gordon, the church called Rev Walter R. Prince, who served as the pastor of Pleasant Grove for approximately ten years. It was under his leadership that Pleasant Grove moved

from having worship only two Sundays out of a month to being a four Sunday a month worship church.

Subsequent to his leadership, Rev. Herman Grandison was called to pastor Pleasant Grove in March of 1978. His tenure lasted approximately thirteen years until May of 1991 when he was called home to be with the Lord. Then, in 1992, Rev. Benjamin Petway was elected as pastor and he served until his successor Rev. John Shelton was called to pastor the congregation in July of 1997. It was under Rev. Shelton that Pleasant Grove began to establish some ministries to serve this congregation.

Finally, in November of 2001, The Pleasant Grove Baptist Church called Rev. H.B. Sampson, III to be their pastor. Upon accepting this call, Pastor Sampson has sought to serve this congregation with all of his might for the glory and honor of God.

Demographic Composition

There are several demographic considerations that H.B. will examine as it pertains to the community within which Pleasant Grove Baptist Church resides. Without question, the various facets that make up this congregation's surrounding landscape must be assessed in order to ascertain those individuals to whom this church minister and those conditions to which this church shall strive to redress. It is with this fact in mind that H.B., with the aid of the information from the 2000 U.S. Census, sought to unravel the demographic particularities of this congregation's communal composition.

The population of the Amelia area has undergone a 29.7 % change from 1990-2000, which out paces the Virginia average of 14.4 %. This necessarily means that over the past ten years Amelia has grown at an 18.3 % faster rate than its state average. Furthermore, between the months of April 2000 and July 2001, this area has experienced a

2.2 % population change compared to the 1.5% rate of Virginia and a 1.2 % rate of growth nationally. In as much as these rates are comparable to those estimates for the entire 2001 year, these figures seem to indicate that Amelia is indeed an area that is experiencing significant population growth.

Ethnically speaking, Amelia is predominately White in composition. According to the 2001 Census, Whites represent 70.2 % of the overall racial population, which is fairly consistent with most tabulations of national percentages. Those of African American descent, however, make up 28.1 % of the Amelia area, which in actuality is considerable higher than the 19.6% that African American's represent in communities across the nation. Those of other nationalities are marginal in representation in Amelia at best. This necessarily means that, although Amelia is largely White in its ethnic composition, African Americans still have a more significant ethnic presence in Amelia than they do on average throughout the United States.

In addition to the various ethnic groups represented in this area, the ages of those in Amelia break down along the lines of being 6.3% of persons under 5 years old, 25.3% under 18 years of age, and 13.3 % of those who are over the age of 65. Based upon these figures, 38.6 % of the population in Amelia is either under 18 or over 65, which infers that 61.4 % of the persons in Amelia are between the ages of 18 and 65 years of age. It is worth mentioning that these numbers are within a standard deviation of those reflected throughout the American landscape.

The level of education is another indicator worthy of demographic consideration. Educationally, this area has an average of 68.3% who are high school graduates. This is quite a significant difference from the 81.5% statewide average of Virginians who have at least a high school diploma. A comparative analysis of these figures show that those in

Amelia county who are high school graduates is 13.2% lower than those throughout the entire state of Virginia.

The educational disparity that exists between Amelia and Virginia as a whole is revealed as being even more distant when it comes to those whose academic accomplishments range from a Bachelor's degree or higher. While those in the state who have a Bachelor's degree is a median of 29.5%, those in Amelia with the same level of education is 9.8%, which is a 19.7% gap between the two areas.

Having highlighted the educational demographic indicator, we will now examine the economic aspect of Amelia. One of the most telling aspects of this area's economic standing is to examine the average income for those in this area. Per capita, the median income for those who live in Amelia is \$18,858.00. When this amount of income is examined in light of a median state income of \$23,975.00, we find that the average person in Amelia has an income that is 21% less than their statewide counterpart.

Finally, the researcher wishes to share the demographic information regarding minority-owned businesses in this area. According to statistics, the number of minority-owned businesses in Amelia County are virtually non-existent. While the state average for minority entrepreneurs is 14.9% in Virginia, the statistical data shows that the minority business owners in Amelia is less than one hundred.

Revelation of Meaning

When we view Amelia in light of all the aforementioned demographic information, we can say that, although the African American ratio is greater in this area than national averages, this area is in need of, among other things, educational, economical, and entrepreneurial development. Furthermore, with this area being located on the edge of the

Richmond area's larger population growth, it is not a far-fetched estimate that these needs will increase exponentially with the projected population increase within the next couple of years.

Synergy: Blowing God's Cover

In an effort to better understand what God is trying to do in the community of Amelia through the ministry of H.B. Sampson III, one must uncover those aspects of H.B.'s ministry that are most compatible with the needs present in the Amelia area. It is with this in mind that H.B. has sought to "blow God's cover" and see the commonality between his story, the story of his church, and its community.

As it pertains to his life's story, there is one theme that seems to be consistent throughout H.B.'s existential experience. One has only to reflect upon the fact that his mother was not supposed to be able to bear children and his father who was not expected to grow up to understand that this is not a story of normative proportions. It was not through ordinary means that H.B. was born, but rather through extraordinary means. By and large, H.B.'s conception was due to the intervention of the divine's second opinion. When others said that it could not be, God's second opinion said that it could be. When other said that he should not be, God's second opinion said that he should be. When others said that he will not be, God's second opinion said that he will be. H.B.'s very existence is one that is contrary to conventional means.

Without question, this non-conventional form of faithful conception has been a standard by which H.B.'s life has been governed. In fact, everything about H.B. has been due to, part and parcel, a faith-based way of life. This theme resurfaces over and over again throughout H.B. life. In his calling, his marriage, his family life, and his children,

there is the overwhelming presence of God doing that which is 'other than.' Without being overly philosophical, H.B.'s life could be summarized as having a thematic overtone of being 'other than' that which is normative and conventional. Said differently, his story has been one that is saturated with the reality of faith as a viable means of existence.

H.B. both has been and continues to be a paradigm of faith as an alternative lifestyle. Faith as an alternative lifestyle is the quintessential ingredient of H.B.'s entire existence and ministry. God has used H.B. and his family as a means of exemplifying faith as an alternative to both normative and conventional expectations. When mainstream opinions usually carry the day, God has H.B. as both proof and an endorser of faith in divine second opinions as a tangible and viable alternative. In short, all that H.B. is or will ever be is intricately connected to faith as an alternative lifestyle.

With this in mind, the question must naturally be asked, "If H.B.'s ministry is indicative of a faith based existence as an alternative lifestyle, then why would God place him to serve in the Amelia area?" H.B. believes that the motive of the divine for this placement becomes increasingly clearer when viewed through the lenses of Pleasant Grove's context. Based upon the data, this congregation's context has significant educational, economical, and entrepreneurial concerns, which are highlighted when viewed relative to the state and national averages. Therefore, it can be surmised that God has appointed H.B. to serve in this locale in order to provide faith-based alternatives for the educational, economical, and entrepreneurial plight of this community.

Faith: An Alternative Lifestyle

At this point, I believe that I have blown God's cover. It has become apparent as to what God is up to in placing H.B. to serve this congregation in the Amelia community. The divine, in his infinite wisdom, sagaciously saw that this community needed a person who both understands the importance of seeking the intervention of God's second opinion to normative expectations and who espouses or exemplifies faith as an alternative lifestyle. God knew that this community needed such a person as this in order to provide a faith-oriented approach to meeting the educational, economical, and entrepreneurial needs of Amelia. Having said this, H.B. believes that the Lord has placed him in his particular ministry context primarily in order to meet the economic depravity of this community through the viable faith based alternative of biblical and social education.

One of the means by which God has inspired H.B. to offer a faith-based alternative to the economic disparity in his congregation's community was revealed to be in the form of an education model for economic empowerment through entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY PROJECT

In an effort to further understand how entrepreneurship can serve as a tangible means of economic development and empowerment, this chapter will discuss several individuals along with their theories, which function as the primary underpinning for this project's concept of economic empowerment through entrepreneurship. Then, in an effort to be even handed in our consideration, this chapter will share the converse view, which holds that the empowering ability of entrepreneurship in the black community is nothing more than a myth. After rebutting this argument, we discuss the erosive effects of integration on black entrepreneurship. Lastly, this chapter establishes a working definition of entrepreneurship, shows how the church has always been an entrepreneurial agent, and how this entrepreneurial identity has far reaching ministerial implications for the body of Christ in this contemporary era.

As a group of people who have traditionally been disenfranchised and marginalized, the African American community has often sought to address all forms of oppression and inequality. These stratagems of liberation were inclusive of, but not exclusive to, the social, political, and economic stratas of American society. In fact, one might go as far as to say that the overarching theme of liberation and empowerment in the aforementioned arenas both have and continues to be a fundamental mission of the black community and the church at large. Although all of these areas are worthy of our

consideration, the focus of this project shall primarily be concerned with the struggle of economic development and empowerment for those who are typically deemed to be on the fringes of society.¹

The fight for both economic empowerment and development has generally figured preeminently in the struggle for equality due to, in no small part, the fact that the “most severe forms of racial discrimination against black people have been economic in character.”² For this reason, in an effort to both mitigate and negate the economic inequities of the marginalized, men such as Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Dubois, and Martin L. King, Jr. devised economic theories that were intended to economically empower the black community.

The economic theory put forward by Booker T. Washington basically called for self-sufficiency and self-reliance as a means of economic development.³ Of course, the self-reliance that he spoke of was primarily with reference to entrepreneurship. He believed that by pooling our resources and generating our own means of entrepreneurial enterprise we could stimulate economic growth and development within the black

¹ According to Sen, “Economists are sometimes criticized for concentrating too much on efficiency and too little on equity. There may be some ground for complaint here, but it must also be noted that inequality has received attention from economists throughout the history of this discipline.” Amartya Sen. *Development As Freedom* (New York: Random House, Inc, 1999), 107. In addition, Sen makes it clear that the struggle for economic equity should not only address income poverty, as has usually be the case, but capability poverty as well. Ibid., 85ff. As a matter of fact, it is his position that capability improvement can facilitate greater income just as well as greater income can produce improved capability. Ibid., 90. Thus, it could be argued that this project is concerned with improving the capability of those who are economically disenfranchised.

² C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 238.

³ According to some scholars, much of contemporary black economic theory can be attributed to Booker T. Washington’s work. Sibley Butler. *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 70.

community.⁴ By the black community implementing this economic system of becoming more independent and self-sustaining, Washington believed that a true form of financial and economic equality could ultimately be achieved. Otherwise, he believed that African Americans would fail to truly realize their emancipation.⁵ Although many of Booker T. Washington's views afforded him the designation of being an accommodationist, his theories regarding economic development and entrepreneurship "laid the foundation for economic nationalism and the analog of today's ethnic enclave theory within the black community."⁶

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the concept of self-reliance through entrepreneurship did not find its origins with Booker T. Washington. More to the point, every ethnic group that has been relegated to a minority status amid a dominant culture has resorted to entrepreneurship as a means of self-sustainability.⁷ What does distinguish Washington, however, is the fact that he was of the first in the black community to be documented as making such a theoretical assertion.

W.E.B. Dubois was another individual who developed an economic theory for the purposes of economically empowering the marginalized in his community. Although Dubois was in favor of mobilizing the black community through a concerted effort in the areas of politics, intellectual scholasticism, and economics,⁸ his economic theory was substantial. For Dubois, the black community could facilitate economic development by

⁴ Robert Michael Franklin, *Liberating Visions* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 22.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ John Sibley Butler, *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 70.

⁷ Ibid., 77.

⁸ Ibid., 59.

erecting an economic infrastructure that was cooperative in nature. He believed that “by letting Negro farmers feed Negro artisans, and Negro technicians guide Negro home industries, and Negro thinkers plan this integration of cooperation, while Negro artists dramatize and beautify the struggle, economic independence can be achieved.”⁹ In this regard, even though they differed on other key issues, both Dubois and Washington’s theories for economic development were not dissimilar.¹⁰

Lastly, Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. offered an economic theory of empowerment for those who were marginalized within the black community. In addition to a strong work ethic and executing the principle of frugality, Dr. King’s economic theory also offered the black community a form of cooperative community enterprise, which endorsed the creation of “such agencies as credit unions, saving and loan associations, and finance companies . . . in every Negro community.”¹¹ As in the case of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois, Martin L. King’s theory of economic development and empowerment contained a component of self-reliance and sufficiency.

Although the economic theory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. conveyed a component of self-sufficiency, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois’ economic theories of self-reliance and self-sufficiency seems to have been the grounds out of which Dr. King’s economic theory as expressed above sprang and found life. Therefore, the basis of this work’s focus on economic development through entrepreneurship is largely drawn

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰ Juliet E.K. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), 183.

¹¹Martin Luther King, Jr. “Advice For Living.” *Ebony*, XIII (March 1958): 12.

from both Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois' theory of economic development and empowerment.

This is not to say that this theory has been without its critics. One has only to examine the position of E. Franklin Frazier in his work *Black Bourgeoisie*¹² to find an argument to the contrary. By his account, Frazier believed that the empowering nature of economic development through entrepreneurship within the black community is nothing more than a social myth. In his own words, "this social myth has been one of the main elements in the world of 'make-believe' which the black bourgeoisie has created to compensate for its feelings of inferiority in a white world dominated by business enterprise."¹³ Of course, relevant to our discussion is the fact that Frazier believed that this myth was both institutionalized and propagandized by Booker T. Washington.¹⁴ In short, citing both the limitations and failures of black enterprise, Frazier believed that economic empowerment through entrepreneurship was nothing more than a mythological fairy tale concocted by Booker T. Washington and other black leaders in order to soothe the traumatized ego of the Negro mind.

Unlike Frazier, John Butler rejects the notion of economic empowerment through entrepreneurship being a mythological fable spun within the mind of Booker T. Washington. Rather, he holds the position that the failures of black entrepreneurship after the Civil War were due, in part and parcel, to what he called an economic detour. "The idea [of an] economic detour is that Afro-Americans, especially in the period following the

¹² E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1957), 129ff.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 131ff.

Civil War, were restricted by law from operating their business enterprises in an open market.”¹⁵ The segregation of black entrepreneurship by these laws both restricted and stifled black enterprise in a way that was unique to the African American experience. For all intents and purposes, Butler believed that Frazier’s work “attempt [ed] to account for inequality without giving a considerable weight to the importance of racial discrimination.”¹⁶

As a result of Jim Crow and segregation, African Americans had to create an enclave of economic self-sustainability, which manifested itself through entrepreneurship. An unfortunate by-product, however, was that far more blacks than not were conditioned to be consumers rather than entrepreneurs.¹⁷ With integration came greater access to an open market for a black community that had already been conditioned to be mass consumers. It is not a far reach to deduce then that the death knell for black enterprise was sounded when desegregation arrived and integration ensued. Hence, the export of black economic resources out of its community along with the demise of African American entrepreneurship found their beginnings.

According to Butler, it was the system of racial discrimination that caused most blacks to become pre-conditioned consumers. This coupled with the later achievement of integration, more than any other factor, brought about many of the failures and shortcomings in African American entrepreneurship. From this we can gather then that, as

¹⁵ John Sibley Butler, *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 77.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 338.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 79.

Butler argues, economic empowerment through entrepreneurship was not a myth, but rather a paradigm of empowerment that was undermined by racial discrimination.

The author is inclined to agree with Butler in this regard. Entrepreneurship was truly a significant means of economic empowerment. Unfortunately, this conduit of economic stability and self-sustainability within the black community was largely mitigated by racial segregation and negated during integration because African Americans acted upon the choices that desegregation offered. As Dr. Anderson articulated so well, integration was about having, “the same rights and privileges that every other group has—the right to choose.”¹⁸ While the right to have a choice both was and is a key feature of integration, the African American community is the only minority group that has sought to utilize this choice with such a reckless abandonment of their own community’s economic well-being and entrepreneurial enterprise.¹⁹ This is the mitigating factor to which many of the entrepreneurial failures within the black community should be attributed. Thusly, the theory of economic empowerment through self-help and entrepreneurship as proposed by Booker T. Washington remains to be a viable paradigm for the economically oppressed.

Indeed, the economic development of self-sustainability through various forms of entrepreneurship as espoused by both Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois is the primary basis of this treatise. Furthermore, the economic theory of these two men appears to be strongly tied to the form and type of economic development endorsed within the confines of the black church.

¹⁸ Claud Anderson, *PowerNomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America* (Bethesda, MD: PowerNomics Corporation of America, 2001), 49f.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The Black Church And Entrepreneurship

From the time of slavery, the African American community and the church in particular have historically been proactive with regard to economic development and empowerment.²⁰ In fact, it was widely accepted that true liberation could only be accomplished through economic freedom.²¹ To this end, the church and economic development through entrepreneurial endeavors were in many instances both synonymous and intricately connected to one another.

It is out of this entrepreneurial tradition within the church and its community that this project was born. As in the past, it is equally believed that entrepreneurship is both a sufficient and effective means of economic development within the contemporary community. More to the point, both economic growth and eventual economic liberation among the underprivileged in our society can be facilitated by realizing the empowering nature of being an entrepreneur in general and a business entrepreneur in particular.²² Moreover, because the church is to be an agent of liberation, a faith-based (i.e God-Centered; Theocentric) initiative from within the church for economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship would be a viable alternative.²³

²⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 242f.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 241.

²² Steven F. Kreft and Russel S. Sobel. "Public Policy, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Growth," [article online] Available at www.be.wvu.edu/div/econ/work/pdf_file/03-02.pdf, 1; Internet. In addition see Lerone Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America* (Chicago, IL: Johnson Publishing Co., 1987), 290f.

²³ Kerbyjon Caldwell and Walt Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith: Launching Bold Initiatives To Expand God's Kingdom* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2004), 41ff.

Entrepreneurship: The Defining Moment

The church is a community of “Christians banded together to identify opportunities and then use their passion and expertise to meet the needs of those around them.”²⁴ The church’s notion of both identifying and meeting the economic needs and or opportunities of those in its congregation and community as a whole is at the very heart of Christian ministry. One of the key aspects of ministry for the church is to identify and seek to rectify the economic needs of those both within and outside of it walls.²⁵

Equally relevant is the fact that this concept of ministry is essentially entrepreneurial. According to Rev. Kerbyjon Caldwell in *Entrepreneurial Faith*, entrepreneurs are defined as those “who see, evaluate, and respond to opportunities for God . . . [by] launch [ing] initiatives that respond to real needs, takes advantage of opportunities that fit the vision that God gives, creates services that meet real needs, and—most importantly—affects lives that are destined for eternity.”²⁶ To this definition, Michael Gerber adds that an entrepreneur is a creative visionary who seizes opportunities.²⁷ To both of these definitions, the author would add that an entrepreneur is one who is a steward of God’s creative work. This particular definition is both rooted in and drawn from Genesis 2:15, where the bible says that God took Adam and “put him in

²⁴ Ibid., 42f.

²⁵ Matt. 25: 34-46

²⁶ Caldwell and Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 41.

²⁷ Michael E. Gerber, *The E Myth: Revisiting Why Small Business Don’t Work and What To Do About It* (New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 2001), 23f.

the garden of Eden to till the ground and keep it."²⁸ It is based upon the aforementioned textual premise that we view an entrepreneur as a steward over all that God has created.

From all of the aforementioned definitions we can form the working definition that an entrepreneur is a steward of God's vision and resources, creatively seizing the opportunity to meet the needs of one's self and others in a productive manner for the glory of God.²⁹ The only thing that is different from this definition of an entrepreneur and the one generally used in the business world is that in the former God is the one from whom all resources come and for whom all needs and opportunities are ultimately met.³⁰ Hence, to be entrepreneurial is an act of ministry from a God-centered, theocentric approach, which is a mandate of the Christian faith. It has been in keeping with this mandate that the church has both actively and successfully facilitated one form of entrepreneurship or another as an effective means of economic uplift and empowerment.³¹

Entrepreneurship And The Contemporary Church

Indeed, this precedent of entrepreneurial ministry from a God-centered approach should be the basis for the contemporary church's economic development through entrepreneurship. In fact, Dr. Anderson dedicates an entire chapter in his work to the issue of how the black church can further promote economic development within its community. For all intents and purposes, Anderson espouses the notion that the black

²⁸ NRSV.

²⁹ This shall be the working definition for this project.

³⁰ Caldwell and Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith*, 41.

³¹ E. Franklin Frazier, and C. Eric Lincoln, *The Negro Church in America and The Black Church Since Frazier* (New York: Schocken Brooks, 1974), 42.

church must become both a promoter for and a proponent of entrepreneurial enterprise in the African American community.

Of course, the church should model what it preachers. For this reason, the church should be more proactive in its entrepreneurial form of ministry by “establishing faith-based businesses such as mortgage and insurance companies, church-owned lending institutions, paper supply and printing companies, funeral homes, travel agencies, and choir robes.”³² The church must be a participant in the paradigm that it seeks to promote among its people and parishioners. If the church is to be an agent of change, then it must first begin within its own walls.

In addition to becoming a model of entrepreneurial enterprise, it is believed that churches “can increase the wealth ownership of Black people by exposing their congregations to wealth-building opportunities in Black communities in general and by offering entrepreneurial and business development training, financial planning and business networking.”³³ By and large, all of the suggestions that he offers are primarily a call for the black church to begin a more aggressive form of entrepreneurial ministry both internally and within the larger context of its community.

It is at this point that we should now seek to further examine the basis for such an assertion as previously expressed in this chapter—that entrepreneurship is a viable means of economic development and empowerment for those who are economically disenfranchised. With this in mind, let us now plumb the depths of the foundations upon which this theoretical paradigm stands.

³² Anderson, *PowerNomics*, 240.

³³ Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FROM BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction: Laying The Foundation

The author strongly believes that one of the ways by which the economic inequities that exist in America can be redressed is through a theocentric, faith-based initiative for entrepreneurship. In an effort to evaluate the relevance of entrepreneurship as a viable alternative for eradicating economic depravity in America and our contemporary society in general, this treatise further examines entrepreneurship from a biblical, theological, and historical perspective.

Biblical Foundation

Biblically speaking, the primary warrant for this project turns on the premise that God does not want humanity to suffer from any form of oppression and, therefore, desires for those of his people who are marginalized and disenfranchised to have self-reliant and self-sustaining lives. The bible indicates that God is on the side of the oppressed, seeking to elevate them to a higher quality of life. One of the areas this warrant is applicable to is with reference to economic oppression. Said differently, the bible teaches that God wants to elevate those who are economically marginalized by enabling them to be economically self-reliant and self-sustaining. It is the author's position that entrepreneurship is one of

the ways the bible indicates the Lord's desire to economically empower those who are disenfranchised so that they might become self reliant and self-sustaining. For all intents and purposes, the author is proposing a Theocratic Socialism, which is a system and process of helping those in need from a God-centered approach of entrepreneurial stewardship. With this in mind, let us examine how the bible supports this warrant throughout the pages of the holy writ.

It is crucial, first of all, for us to understand that the bible shows how God enables us to be self-reliant and self-sustaining through our stewardship over what He has created, which can be categorized as an entrepreneurial enterprise. Although the term entrepreneurship is not directly mentioned in the bible, it is expressed through the concept of stewardship. Our biblical understanding of stewardship is rooted in the notion that everything ultimately belongs to God who gave humanity the responsibility of managing and organizing that which rightfully belongs to Him.¹ The bible bears witness to this fact when it makes mention of God putting Adam in the garden to "dress and keep it."² Hence, the act of being a steward is generally viewed to be the management of God's divine property and resources.

This biblical understanding of stewardship is closely related to the contemporary definition of an entrepreneur, which is one who "organizes, manages, and assumes the risk of a business or enterprise."³ This is also closely related to our working definition of entrepreneurs, which is one who is a steward of God's vision and resources, creatively seizing the opportunity to meet the needs of one's self and others in a productive manner

¹ Lev. 25:23; Psl. 24:1ff.

² Gen. 2:15

³ *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 10th Edition.*

for the glory of God. This means that from a biblical perspective, entrepreneurship can be understood as a form of stewardship. Therefore, we can safely say that the bible endorses entrepreneurship as an integral feature in the Divine's design for humanity.⁴

The Old Testament

Indeed, entrepreneurial stewardship is depicted as an integral feature of the divine's design for our lives within the Old Testament. So important is this aspect of God's will for our lives that in the Old Testament's account of creation, partnership (i.e. relational companionship) is superseded by that of entrepreneurship (Gen. 1:27ff). If we are to take the word of God seriously and the order by which God chose in His infinite wisdom to meet the needs of humanity, entrepreneurship does appear to figure preeminently in the eyes God. This seems to suggest then that entrepreneurial stewardship is inherent in the Ultimate Concern of the divine for humanity.

Another instance when God made humanity entrepreneurial stewards by giving them land so that they might be self-reliant is expressed in the original Hebrew term "nathan" with reference to the land that God promised to give Abram and his descendants in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis. At this point in the biblical narrative, God is speaking to his chosen vessel in the person of Abram after Abram has left his father's house and his country as God commanded him. It is here that, "the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates . . ."⁵ Here, the word "nathan" is used in this text to show that God planned to bestow this land upon Abram so that he and his descendents might become the

⁴ Gen. 2:15

⁵ Genesis 15: 18ff.

entrepreneurial stewards of the land. Hence, when God ‘gave’ ‘land’ to Abram as an integral feature of His promise, He was demonstrating His desire for Abram and his descendents to be self-reliant, entrepreneurial stewards.

Again, the word “Nathan” resurfaces in this regard within the book of Exodus when the children of Israel were under Egyptian captivity. Here, God says to Moses that he was going to “nathan” or give the land of Canaan to the children of Israel for an heritage as He had promised Abram and his descendants.⁶ As before, God used this term in order to demonstrate that His will for His people is one of entrepreneurship as a form of self-actualization and communal elevation. Said differently, God showed us in this word’s usage that He wanted his people to be entrepreneurs of the land that He gave them as both a means and an ends to economic empowerment. Thus, God’s giving to his people in this particular usage of the word “nathan” is indicative of His desire for His people to be entrepreneurial steward of His promised land.

Of particular interest is the context within which God makes this declaration of his will for his people in the aforementioned passage in scripture. The statement that he is going to ‘nathan’ and or give this land to the children of Israel for them to be entrepreneurial stewards of this land follows his preceding promise to liberate his people from the bondage of captivity and the burden of enslavement.⁷ Here, the bible is conveying that there can be no true form of entrepreneurship as God designed (i.e. God-centered entrepreneurship) in the absence of freedom and liberation from that which is otherwise oppressive.

⁶ Exodus 6: 8

⁷ Exodus 6:1-5

The bible shows us in this passage and scripture that oppression and God-centered entrepreneurship are diametrically opposed to one another and mutually exclusive. In short, entrepreneurship exists in the absence of oppression and visa versa. Hence, the bible depicts the covenantal promise of entrepreneurship as one of the primary goals of liberative activity. This necessarily means that this text directly highlights the fact that God-centered entrepreneurship functions as an ultimate form of liberation and empowerment for the people of God.

All of the aforementioned references serve well in providing us with textual insight into the fact that God gave the land to Adam and Eve, Abram, and the children of Israel who were his descendents, in order that they might actualize His desire for them to become self-reliant entrepreneurs of the land. This textual validity regarding our understanding of God's desire for his people to be entrepreneurs is expressed more specifically when we further examine the Old Testament's understanding of the land as a form of business entrepreneurship.

One such instance from the biblical account can again be found in the book of Genesis. Here we find that the creative activity of the divine was in fact the initiation of the divine business. It is said that after God, the ultimate entrepreneur, finished making all that he created, God "rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."⁸ What is of considerable interest is the term used for the word "work" in this passage. Here, the term used for 'work' is "malachtch," which is the same word that the bible uses

⁸ Genesis 2:2-3

for the term ‘business’ on other occasions.⁹ Thus, we can gather that God’s activity in creation can be understood as a form of divine business activity.

From this, coupled with the fact that God made humanity the entrepreneurial steward of that which was originally His business, we can deduce that entrepreneurial stewardship with regards to business was an aspect of what God had in mind when he gave humanity the business of the land that He himself had made. Furthermore, one might say that when God gave the land to humanity, he was putting forth the first entrepreneurial business initiative of record. In short, this text shows us that God, the sole owner of the land, gave humanity the land because He wanted them to be business entrepreneurs of the land.

Another biblical example of business entrepreneurship as conveyed by the term “malachtch,” which mean ‘business’ with regards to land, can be found in the seventh chapter of II Chronicles. In this chapter, we are told of Jehoshaphat’s abundance and wealth during his reign as king. In the textual account of his wealth, we find that Jehoshaphat “had much business in the cities of Judah . . .”¹⁰ In the case of this text, the word business is used to convey having a large amount of land.¹¹ In light of this fact, there is little question that the bible shows us in this scripture that the possession of land and the notion of having a business were in many cases synonymous. Consequently, we can assert that, during biblical times, being an entrepreneurial steward of land was equally understood as being a business entrepreneur.

⁹ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), 522.

¹⁰ II Chronicles 17:13

¹¹ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 522.

Indeed, there are a plethora of other instances that can serve to further exemplify how the Old Testament endorses entrepreneurial stewardship in general and business entrepreneurship in particular as an integral feature of the divine design for humanity and the people of God. However, I believe that the passages that have been aforementioned are ample for the purposes of our discussion thus far. I now wish share that, while the Old Testament does support entrepreneurial stewardship, it rejects a form of entrepreneurial stewardship that is oppressive to the people of God.

Entrepreneurial Restriction

With reference to entrepreneurial activity, the bible includes the provisionary stipulation that those who are entrepreneurial stewards should not oppress one another in their activities. A good case in point can be found in the book of Leviticus chapter 25. In this text, the bible deals with the year of Jubilee, which was a provision in the Mosaic Law that attempted to ensure a form of justice in entrepreneurial stewardship and or practices. In this passage, the text states that, “In the year of jubilee, ye shall return every man unto his possession and if thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another (Lev. 25:13-14).” Here the notion seems fairly clear that entrepreneurial stewardship was not to be an oppressive enterprise.

In addition, Leviticus 25: 15 goes on to further clarify how the entrepreneurial oppression of others was prohibited by outlining certain buying, selling, and pricing regulations. In an attempt to regulate the aforementioned entrepreneurial practices, the text says that, “according to the number of years after the Jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee: according to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to

the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it, for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he see unto thee. Ye shall not therefore oppress one another: but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the Lord your God (Lev. 25: 15-17).” Indeed, in this chapter of Leviticus, the bible gives us some indication that once the children of Israel received the promised land over which they were to be entrepreneurial stewards, they were not to be oppressive in their buying, selling, and pricing practices. This then shows us that the bible endorses an entrepreneurial stewardship that is not oppressive of others within a given community.

Another case in point regarding how the bible is opposed to an exploitative and oppressive form of entrepreneurial stewardship is found in the Nehemiah 5:1 ff. In this chapter of Nehemiah, we are told of Jewish Nobles and Rulers that are oppressing other Jews through their entrepreneurial practices. These men were, for all intents and purposes, moneylenders who were charging exorbitant interest on their loans. As a result, the people were losing their homes and business, while seeing the family members enslaved to debt. To this, Nehemiah responded by prohibiting the Jewish Nobles and Rulers from practicing this form of oppressive entrepreneurship any longer and making them return all of their ill-gotten fortune. From this text, we can gather that the bible endorses a form of entrepreneurship that supports the community, while meeting the economic needs of the community instead of exploiting and oppressing the community.

In all of the aforementioned instances, the bible firmly rejects any form of entrepreneurship that is oppressive to the people of God. Now that we have shared both how the Old Testament supports entrepreneurial stewardship and rejects any form of oppressive entrepreneurial stewardship, let us turn our attention to the New Testament and the biblical basis that it offers us for business entrepreneurship.

The New Testament

As with the Old Testament, the New Testament makes mention of entrepreneurial stewardship as a means of self-reliance¹² and economic empowerment.

In the Gospel according to Luke, which “is heavily colored with economic language,”¹³ we find a wonderful biblical reference in this regard. Of significant interest is Luke 4: 16-19 with its “strong overtones of the Jubilee year renewal.”¹⁴ By utilizing this textual reference with its Old Testament Jubilee influence, Jesus was seeking to convey that one of the reasons for his coming was to restore the people of God to the role of entrepreneurial stewardship.

In the following chapter, we find further support for entrepreneurial stewardship, albeit in the particular area of partnership and joint collaboration.¹⁵ According to Luke 5:

¹² Oakman argues that the message of Jesus is not one of self-sufficiency. Douglas E. Oakman, *Jesus and the Economic Question of His Day* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 148, 160-168. However, Moxnes states that the moral peasant economy, with its view ‘from below’, is based on subsistence, which includes being a fully functioning member of society and being able to meet social obligations. Halvor Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988), 81f. From the perspective of the peasants, being a fully functioning member of the community and meeting ones social obligations bespoke being able to share with ones family, clan, neighbors or fellow villagers in their time of need. (Ibid., 32ff.) From this we can gather that the concept of subsistence in the peasant economy required a form of self-sufficiency. This is relevant because the feature of subsistence in the peasant economy served as the conceptual foundation for the general reciprocity (giving without expecting anything in return) that Jesus expressed in his message of the Kingdom of God. (Ibid., 96f.) Thus, it can be concluded that Jesus’ message of the Kingdom of God did entail a concept of self-sufficiency.

¹³ Moxnes. *The Economy of the Kingdom*, 155.

¹⁴ Ibid., 154.

¹⁵ Ibid., 62. According to Oakman, entrepreneurial partnership was a part of the economic vision and model that Jesus espoused and endorsed as it pertained to the Kingdom of God. Oakman, *Jesus and the Economic Question of His Day*, 207f. It is worth mentioning that, with regards to this economic vision for the Kingdom of God, the relationship between entrepreneurial partners was to be one firmly rooted in mutuality, equality (i.e. equal distribution of power), and interdependence. (Ibid., 208-210.) Perhaps these findings about entrepreneurial partnership and Jesus’ economic vision for the Kingdom of God afford us an additional insight as to the reason that Jesus called Simon to become a fisher of men (Luke 5: 1-11).

1-11, we find that Jesus entered into an empty boat that belonged to Simon and began preaching. After preaching, Jesus told Simon to once again launch out into the deep and let his net down for a draught. To the Master's request, Simon responded that their entrepreneurial enterprise the night before had been fruitless, but that he, along with his partners, would do as he said.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter, they caught a huge amount of fish and "beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them."¹⁷ From this text, we are informed of a business enterprise in the form of entrepreneurial partnership.

Entrepreneurial stewardship is again conveyed in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Luke. In this chapter, while trying to clarify an issue regarding salvation, the disciples told Jesus that "we have left all, and followed thee."¹⁸ The term used in this passage for 'all' is a Greek word that can refer to homes, property, possessions, and business.¹⁹ Thus, when the disciples were saying that they left all, they were saying that, in addition their familial ties, they left their homes, property, possessions, and, for the sake of our discussion, their businesses. Jesus responded by telling them that the kingdom of God is not about negating business entrepreneurship, but rather it is about

¹⁶ Luke 11:4-5

¹⁷ Luke 11: 7

¹⁸ Luke 18: 28

¹⁹ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 370.

the facilitation of their self-reliance through liberation, wealth,²⁰ and well-being as business entrepreneurs for the kingdom of God.²¹

This is important for us to understand as the people of God because far too often there is the mistaken notion that the kingdom of God requires the abandonment of all earthly enterprise. This text provides us with the view that one's subscription to the Kingdom of God was never intended to be at the expense of economic development and business entrepreneurship. Instead, this passage shows us that the divine's view of the Kingdom of God is one that both endorses and encourages business entrepreneurship. Often, we have associated the Kingdom of God with solely spiritual concepts and ideals. However, God's Kingdom was not originally intended to be relegated only to that of spirituality. Rather, it was to encompass the totality of the human experience in general and business entrepreneurship in particular.

In all of the aforementioned scriptural selections, we have sought to show the bible's support of entrepreneurial stewardship. In light of these texts, it is believed that in both the Old and New Testaments of the bible, we have found scriptural evidence that entrepreneurial stewardship and or business entrepreneurship is an integral feature of the divine's design for humanity.

²⁰ According to some writers, Jesus was antithetical and or opposed to wealth. Oakman, *Jesus and the Economic Question of his Day*, 156-159. However, Moxnes suggested that, in Luke's gospel, Jesus depicted a village/peasant economic model that is not opposed to wealth, but to the oppressive means by which it is acquired and or spent. Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom*, 82ff. To this position, Oakman adds that Jesus was not against wealth per se. Rather, he was against any form of wealth that was not universally shared and partaken of by all. Oakman, *Jesus and the Economic Question of his Day*, 159.

²¹ Luke 18:28ff.

Entrepreneurial Restrictions

The Old Testament is not alone in providing textual evidence that stands against any form of oppressive entrepreneurial stewardship. As with the Old Testament, the New Testament has stipulation against entrepreneurial oppression. While there are many passages that would serve as textual validity for this principle, we shall offer only a few for your consideration.

As before, Luke 4: 16-19 is informative for our discussion in this matter. As has already been mentioned, this textual selection has “strong overtones of the Jubilee year renewal.”²² This concept of Jubilee comes clearly into focus when Jesus says that he came to “preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”²³ In addition to being an endorsement for entrepreneurial stewardship, this passage equally serves to inform us that entrepreneurial stewardship was not to be an oppressive institution. Thus, we can gather that, while Jesus preached and endorsed a kingdom of God that viewed entrepreneurial stewardship favorably, by the same token it can be concluded that Jesus was against any form of entrepreneurial enterprise that was oppressive.

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, we are afforded another New Testament example of how entrepreneurial stewards should be compassionate rather than oppressive in their entrepreneurial enterprise. In this chapter, Jesus tells us of an entrepreneurial steward who was a lord and had a servant who was discovered to be indebted to him. Initially, the Lord was going to extract his payment in a way that would have been oppressive and left the servant completely destitute, without his family, and enslaved.

²² Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom*, 154.

²³ Luke 4: 19

However, the servant asked for leniency and the Lord was moved with compassion to the extent that he forgave the servant's debt (Matt. 18: 23-27). From this we can gather that, as in the case of the lord towards his servant, we should be compassionate rather than oppressive in our activities of entrepreneurial stewardship.

This fact is further supported by the latter portion of the aforementioned parable in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew when the same servant that was forgiven by his lord went to a fellow servant that owed him money and demanded payment. However, when the fellow servant was unable to pay and asked for leniency and time to repay what he owned, the servant became both oppressive and abusive in his entrepreneurial dealings with the fellow servant (Matt. 18: 28-30).

The fellow servant responded to this abusive and oppressive activity by informing this abusive servant's master of his lack of compassion. Shortly thereafter, the master punished the oppressive and abusive servant because he did not show his fellow servant the same kind of compassion in his entrepreneurial practices that he himself had been shown by the Master (Matt. 18: 31-34).

Here, as before, this pericope shows us that the bible does not endorse an oppressive form of entrepreneurial stewardship. Instead, it shows us that our entrepreneurial activity should be tempered with Godly compassion. As Jesus said in the gospel of Luke, "as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise (Luke 6: 31)." Said differently, do unto others, as you would have them to do unto you. Indeed, the bible tells us that we should be entrepreneurial stewards that are just and fair in our practices (Col. 4: 1; Eph. 6: 9).

To be sure, all of the aforementioned scriptural references provide a biblical foundation for business entrepreneurship and the biblical stipulation thereto. These

stipulations include the fact that the bible never intended for entrepreneurial enterprise to be oppressive. In this regard, the bible espouses a form of business ethic by which to govern the people of God. The implication for the people of God cannot be overlooked. Those who are the people of God should have an ethical compass by which they perform their business practices. What is interesting is the fact that, according to modern research, those who are professed people of God have been proven to function with a higher level of ethics in their business practices (i.e. they are less oppressive in their business activities) than those who are less likely to be the people of God.²⁴ Thus, we can infer that those who are governed by the biblical ethic of entrepreneurship are not oppressive in their business activities, which seems to usher us into a “world of socially responsible business.”²⁵ Having shown the biblical premise for project, let us now turn our attention to the theological and historical foundations for this form of economic empowerment.

Theological Foundation

The theological foundation for our understanding of business entrepreneurship as a part of God’s will for our lives is most evident when viewed through the lens of his creative purpose, our having been made in the image of God, humanity’s fall from favor, the redemptive process through the salvific work of Jesus Christ and the ecclesiological body of Christ as a whole. We will now examine each of these theological perspectives in more detail.

²⁴ Justin G. Longenecker, Joseph A. McKinney, and Carlos W. Moore, “Entrepreneurship, Religion, and Business Ethics” [paper online] available at <http://www.usasbe.org/knowledge/proceedings/1998/16-Longenecker.PDF>; Internet.

²⁵ Joel Makower *Beyond the Bottom Line: Putting Social Responsibility to Work for Your Business and the World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 10.

Creation

The validity of entrepreneurship as a form of economic empowerment is supported theologically from the time of creation. In fact, the act of creation itself was an entrepreneurial enterprise.²⁶ Thus, the creation epic as recorded in the word of God affords us the opportunity to make a theological observation regarding the issue of entrepreneurship with reference to humanity. However, in order for us to arrive at the theological relevance of entrepreneurship of mankind as an integral aspect of man's destiny, we must begin with God as the original source of, and therefore, owner of all that was created. Indeed, just as the epic of creation begins with God, so must our theological interrogation of man's divine destiny to be entrepreneurs.

In the first chapter of the book of Genesis, we are informed that "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."²⁷ This creative activity on the part of the divine took place, as many classical scholars would say, "ex nihilo," which means out of nothing.²⁸ This necessarily means that all that was created originated in him and issued forth from him. Said differently, all that was created found its origins in the un-originated, indestructible, author of eternal motion.²⁹ The divine "did not act upon something when he created, for there was nothing to act upon; he did not speak to someone, for there was no

²⁶ Martin H. Krieger, *Entrepreneurial Vocations: Learning from the Calling of Augustine, Moses, Mothers, Antigone, Oedipus, and Prospero* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), ixff.

²⁷ Genesis 1:1

²⁸ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 84ff.

²⁹ Samuel E. Stumps and James Fieser, *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy* 7th ed (New York: McGraw Hill Publishers, 2003), 9.

one to hear.”³⁰ All that exists found its point of origin with the Holy. According to Tillich, he gave “the power of being to everything that has being out of the creative ground of the divine life.”³¹ In other words, “God is not like the craftsman of Plato’s *Timaeus* who imposed form and order on pre-existing matter.”³² Rather, God created all that was, is, and will ever be from within his mind and through his speech. This in turn brought everything into being as we know it to be. This is relevant because, as the source of all that was created, God created out of nothing, which is according to Krieger an act of entrepreneurialism at its best, and thereby functioned as the sole owner of his created work.³³

Furthermore, God’s activity of creation was one of intentionality. It was not a random undertaking that meandered aimlessly in the realm of nothingness. God created the earth along with all of its occupants for a specific purpose. This sense of purpose is one of the overarching themes nestled within the theology of creation.

According to Migliore, “God the creator is purposive, and the world that he has created is dynamic and purposeful.”³⁴ Nothing that God has brought into being is without meaning. From the depths of the ocean to the heights of the blue ether, God had a reason for everything that he spoke into existence. Of particular relevance for us is the purpose that God had for humanity.

³⁰Paul K. Jewett, *God, Creation, and Revelation: A Neo-Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 457.

³¹Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Volume 1* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 262.

³² Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, 84.

³³ Krieger. *Entrepreneurial Vocations*, ixff.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 90.

Inherent within this intentionality was the divine provision for man's ordained destiny to be an entrepreneur of God's creation. With such an awesome privilege and responsibility entrusted to humanity, we must indeed ask the ontological question, "what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For [God] hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."³⁵ The entrepreneurship over the resources that God freely gave to humanity is essential to our theological understanding of God's desire for man to be entrepreneurs, which is a God-given right of all humanity.³⁶ Without question, God provided all humanity with an inherent right of entrepreneurship. This inherent right and privilege was afforded humanity when it was created in the Image of the divine.

The Image of God

God, the creator, made everything according to his will and culminated his creative process with humanity. According to Genesis, God made man in his image and after his likeness.³⁷ This is what many classical theologians refer to as the "Imago Dei." Man being created in the image of God is indeed to be understood as "an imprint or endowment of the very character of God . . . which takes place in the concrete and particular existence of each person."³⁸ This means that the entrepreneurial stewardship being freely given or

³⁵ Psalms 8:4-5

³⁶ Frank Grace, *Concept of Property in Modern Christian Thought* (Urbana, IL: The University of Illinois Press, 1953), 68.

³⁷ Genesis 1: 26-27

³⁸ Ray S. Anderson, *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Pasadena: Fuller Seminary Press, 1982), 71

“nathan” to humanity from the God of provision in the creation story is indicative of the privileges afforded them as the image of God.

Included in these privileges afforded humanity as the image of God is that of self-sustainability and reliance. This was a characteristic given to humanity from the God of human flourishing. This God of viability, who is self-reliant and self-sustaining, endowed his creation, which was created in His image, with the same quality of viability unique to the divine himself. By God creating humanity in his image and endowing it with features of the divine’s character, he showed self-reliance to be an integral aspect of His plan for humanity. This theological view is not one to be minimized with reference to the benefits bestowed upon humanity as the image of God.

Although man’s being created in the image of God afforded him the privileged freedom of entrepreneurial stewardship, it was not without some responsibilities. As William Temple once said, “the relation [ship] of freedom to responsibility is intricate.”³⁹ Man had several responsibilities that he was accountable for as an entrepreneurial steward of what God created.

One of humanity’s critical obligations was not to attempt the ownership of that for which the divine had reserved for himself. Said differently, God gave humanity the rights of being entrepreneurial stewards over his resources with the stipulation that he would not eat from either the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. To do so would result in an estrangement from the God in whose very image humanity was both formed and created.

Unfortunately, this is what transpired in the Garden of Eden when humanity ate of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1ff). They lost sight of this divine stipulation to the extent that

³⁹ William Temple, *God, Man and Nature* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1956), 223.

they violated his command by trying to possess and own the fruits from both the tree of knowledge and the tree of God and evil, which God had reserved for himself. This act of disobedience, which can be said to have found its impetus in man's greed, caused a breach of the agreement that God had made with man and ushered in humanity's alienation from God.

The Fall: God-Blind

Our alienation from God, which Tillich understood to be a "universal transition from essential goodness to existential estrangement,"⁴⁰ is what one writer called our being "God-blind."⁴¹ In many ways, this is the very basis of what is commonly considered to be the theology of human sin. It is the inability to see God as our creator in whose image we were formed and the sole owner of all His created works. Thus, sin is the act of being alienated from God by losing sight of who God is, what he has required of us as his people, and having a distorted vision of what our divinely ordained destiny is from God.

Humanity rejected the divine vision of entrepreneurial stewardship, which was consequently a God-centered form of entrepreneurship that gave God the glory in all entrepreneurial enterprise as the sole owner of all created works. When humanity rejected this divine vision of a God-centered entrepreneurship, they attempted to own what they were merely intended to be stewards of and thereby sought a self-centered form of entrepreneurship.

⁴⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology: Vol 2* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 39.

⁴¹ Karl Heim, *God Transcendent: Foundation for a Christian Metaphysics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 213.

The blinding effects of sin caused humanity to lose sight of God's desire for them to be entrepreneurial stewardship of His resources, which resulted in the tragic loss of the divine's vision for humanity to be self-reliant through a God-centered form of entrepreneurship. In the absence of this entrepreneurial vision for humanity, oppressive forms of economic stratagems, systems and structures ensued. Stated differently, in the absence of a God-Centered form of entrepreneurship, which espoused entrepreneurial stewardship on the part of humanity, oppressive forms of entrepreneurial enterprise were born. Hence, the economic oppression of the marginalized is a direct result of humanity losing sight of the divine's vision of a God-centered entrepreneurship. Fortunately, God continues to be a God of the oppressed and facilitated the redemptive work of Christ.

Christology: Restored Vision

Jesus Christ came to restore that which was lost as a result of our separation from God. Jesus represented "the essential unity between God and man under the conditions of existence and re-establish [ed] this unity in all those who participate in his being."⁴² This redemptive and reconciliatory work of Christ on the part of humanity was to once again restore the clarity regarding God's vision for humanity to be self-reliant through an entrepreneurial stewardship that is God-centered. In short, Jesus came to restore what was lost due to sin, which included God's divine vision of a God-centered entrepreneurship.

This was the quintessential purpose of Jesus Christ's coming. Tillich notes that "The Christ' is actually the Christ, namely, he who brings the new state of things, the New Being."⁴³ Christ came to renew the vision of God-centered entrepreneurship as both

⁴² Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol.2*, 110

⁴³ Ibid., 97.

a form of freedom and liberation from economic oppression of the marginalized and disenfranchised.

Upon one occasion, Jesus read the passage out of Isaiah that stated “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”⁴⁴ After reading this passage and taking his seat, Jesus then said, “this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”⁴⁵ This is relevant for us because it bespeaks the mission and goal of his coming as the Christ of the world.

Jesus Christ came to be the liberator of those who where under the blindness of oppression. According to John’s gospel, Jesus states,” the thief cometh not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: [but] I am come that . . . [you] might have life and that . . . [you] have it more abundantly.”⁴⁶ As it pertains to the primary subject of our concern, this informs us that God gave his son Jesus Christ as a means of restoring a proper relationship with God and thereby restoring man to both a position and a perspective of human flourishing and self-sustainability through a God-centered entrepreneurship. Said differently, through Jesus Christ, God-centered entrepreneurship is once again revealed as a blessed state of man’s destiny and looked upon as a tangible means of economic development and empowerment.

⁴⁴Luke 4: 18

⁴⁵Luke 4: 21

⁴⁶ John 10:10

As a liberator, Jesus came to free humanity “from unjust social structures that destroy people.”⁴⁷ This is not only with reference to the unjust spiritual structures, but to any type of societal structure that negates peoples’ lives. This is inclusive of and not limited to oppressive and destructive economic structures that mitigate one’s having a decent quality of life. It is worth mentioning that Jesus liberates us in such a fashion that the underprivileged experience freedom both individually and communally.⁴⁸

Consequently, the liberation of Jesus meant the economic liberation of an individual and the community within which he resides. Those who were economically impoverished were freed from every form of financial bondage and oppression.⁴⁹ This lets us know that the God of liberation, manifested in the person of Jesus Christ, is a God who acted to restore humanity’s economic freedom through, among other things, both the right and privilege of business entrepreneurship.

Ecclesiological Vision

As it is with God and Christ, so it is with the church. The church is to be a community of baptized believers who corporately embody Christ and espouse his ethic.⁵⁰ This, consequently, means that the church is a covenant community of Christians who, like their savior and Lord, seek to liberate those who are oppressed, marginalized, and disenfranchised. Therefore, the church is to be a corporate agent of change in its

⁴⁷Robert McAfee Brown, *Liberation Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/Knox Press, 1993), 61.

⁴⁸Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1976), 100f.

⁴⁹Elsa Tamez, *Bible of the Oppressed* (New York: Orbis Books, 1982), 72f.

⁵⁰Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Pub., 1994), 607ff.

community and society as a whole. For all intents and purposes, the church is to be an entrepreneurial steward of its congregants and community. It is to identify the needs of its people and community and seize the opportunity to implement God's vision for these people's need in a productive manner so that God can get the glory. This means, then, that the church is to be an institution that undertakes a God-centered and or theocentric approach to entrepreneurship in a manner that God gets the glory and the kingdom of God is advanced.

Historical Foundation

Having adumbrated the theological foundation for entrepreneurship as a significant means for economic empowerment, the author now wishes to elaborate upon the historical merit in this regard. While, as Peter Drucker believes, it may have been the entrepreneurial innovation in the form of the horse stirrup that gave birth to feudalism,⁵¹ it was from within the system of feudalism itself that we have found the origins of Eurocentric entrepreneurship, as we know it to be in the western world today.

European Entrepreneurship: Feudal Beginnings

Within the system of Feudalism, "apart from both the peasant population and the groups engaged in the honorable task connected with the exercises of authority, there had always existed isolated nuclei of merchants and craftsmen,"⁵² who were the entrepreneurs of their day. These small groups of individuals had occupations that were more in the area

⁵¹ Peter F. Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York: Harper Collins Publishing, 1993), 23.

⁵² Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society: Social Classes and Political Organization Vol. 2, Part VI* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 353

of manufacturing, trade, and commerce, which usually enabled them to be free in many ways from the vassalage of feudalism. During this era, these free merchants and craftsmen were never completely missing from the European landscape.

However, their presence became more prevalent during what is known as the second feudal age, which is when these merchants and craftsmen began to become more concentrated in towns that quickly became designated as the primary places for trade and commerce in their various areas of occupational expertise. Artisans of every trade and skill began to make their way to these towns and cities where they were free to both practice and exchange their crafts and merchandise for monetary compensation.

As these different entrepreneurial artisans, craftsmen, merchants, and manufactures arrived at these European towns, they began to organize themselves into different merchant and craft guilds. These different guilds “were associations of business owners that promoted the interest of their members.”⁵³ In addition to helping those member or families of members who had fallen on hard times or suffered loss, these guilds were instrumental in regulating both the quality and prices of the products that their specific group both produced and sold.⁵⁴ In most instances, these towns were primarily composed of either one large guild or, in other cases, many guilds collectively who functioned in the aforementioned capacity.

The towns that housed these specific types of free and master-less people with their various merchants and craftsmen were known by the French as communes and by the

⁵³ William C. Jordan, *The Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1996), 182.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 185. Also, William Stearns Davis, *Life On A Mediaeval Barony* (New York: Harper And Brothers Pub., 1951), 362ff.

English as Burghs.⁵⁵ It is from these names that we get the terms burgesses, bourgeois, or bourgeoisies, which were used to describe this new distinctive middle class group of merchants and craftsmen that dwelled in the towns.⁵⁶ These burghs and communes, as they were called, grew to become strong centers of entrepreneurial commerce and trade. Furthermore, they eventually obtained the support of the Monarch and Nobles, who received a percentage of the goods sold in exchange for the city's freedom from vassalage.⁵⁷

The feudal lords encouraged the bourgeois' relative emancipation from feudalism in these free towns along with their entrepreneurial enterprise because it increased the amount of money that they received in exchange for that freedom. One might say that, as a result of the urban entrepreneurial activity of the free bourgeoisies coupled with the support of the noble lords, Europe made a revolutionary shift from a largely agrarian based economy to an economy based on the commerce and trade of entrepreneurial enterprise.⁵⁸ It is in this regard that feudalism gives us one of our first models and illustrations of European entrepreneurship that was exported to colonial America.

⁵⁵ Of particular interest is that the communes had not only relative freedom to carry out entrepreneurial enterprise, but they also had a communal pledge that all of the inhabitants swore to and which was based upon a pledge of equality rather than one of subordination as in the case of the feudal Lords and peasants. Marc Bloch, *Vol. 2*, 354ff.

⁵⁶ Bloch, *Vol. 2*, 353ff.

⁵⁷ Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society: The Growth of Ties and Dependence Vol. 1, Part IV* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 69

⁵⁸ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York: Random House, 1994), 448.

African Entrepreneurship: Precolonial Origins

Although feudalism has been shown to be the origin of European entrepreneurship, the concept, notion, and enterprise of business entrepreneurship as we know it was nothing new to those on the African continent. “While seldom emphasized by scholars of the American experience, trade and marketing were economic activities in which all Africans either participated or held an interest, regardless of their societal status or where they stood on the occupational hierarchy.”⁵⁹ This means that entrepreneurial enterprise was an integral feature in the African culture.

In precolonial Africa, trade and commerce were often conducted in open-air market places. For instance, “in the markets of the large towns, goods were sold in a spacious square or along the streets by a large number of traders, some in mat-covered stalls, others on the open streets. In some places, stalls were located throughout the market area, while permanent business establishments were tightly crowded along narrow paths through which prospective buyers were forced to pick their way”⁶⁰ From this we can gather that the open air markets in Africa were economic centers for entrepreneurial trade and commerce. These African entrepreneurs even sought to set the mood for a pleasurable shopping experience. According to Walker, “entertainment was very much a part of market life . . . bands of musicians playing their drums and gongs”⁶¹ was an ever present feature.

⁵⁹Juliet E. K. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship* (New York: Twayne Publishing, 1998), 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁶¹ Ibid.

The entrepreneurial activity was so extensive in precolonial Africa that various trade, craft, and merchant guilds were organized. In addition to the trade guilds, “usually, craft specialists, jewelers, goldsmiths, iron makers, weavers, potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, silversmith, woodworkers, brass smiths, ivory carvers, drum makers, miners, brewers, salt workers, medicine makers, and even minstrels and dancers were organized in guilds.”⁶² Among other things, these guilds were formulated in order to regulate prices, while also insuring a certain high standard and quality of work by its members.⁶³ Furthermore, these guilds (i.e entrepreneurial unions) were known for enforcing strict guidelines upon all of their participants. Failure to meet a guild’s regulations could result in the member being banned from future participation and or having all privileges revoked.⁶⁴

It is worth mentioning that within African enterprise, there was a concept of cooperative entrepreneurship. In other words, the entrepreneurs of precolonial Africa were not fundamentally individualistic in their business entrepreneurship. It has been said that, “the cultural ethic that guided cooperative family, kinship, community, and ethnic groups in both small village and the large complex kingdoms in precolonial West and West Central Africa can be summarized by such questions as ‘Why do we work together? But

⁶² Ibid., 6f.

⁶³ Ibid., 4, 7.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 7.

isn't this our land? Aren't we brothers? Are we not as one man?"⁶⁵ Indeed, the precolonial Africans had a form of entrepreneurial enterprise that was very cooperatively communal in its orientation.

Without question, there is historical evidence that precolonial Africans possessed both a concept and notion of business entrepreneurship and enterprise. Therefore, we can conclude that within the wealth of knowledge that the African were forced to bring to America under the peculiar institution of slavery was the economic paradigm of business entrepreneurship.

American Slavery

Both the European and African understanding of entrepreneurship made their way to America albeit by different means and for different motives. It is indeed interesting how these two cultures with their concepts of entrepreneurship came to collide in America.

After the middle ages, many Europeans, fleeing religious persecution and oppression along with a quest for economic wealth, came to America and colonialism was spewed across the landscape. One of the pieces of luggage that these colonists brought with them from Europe to America was the economic system of trade and commerce that had grown out of feudalism. Of course, by this time, their economic views had evolved to become more entrepreneurial and capitalistic in orientation.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 9. It is noteworthy that in precolonial West and West Central Africa mutual aid societies, savings organizations, and cooperative work association were prevalent. This may help to give some historical precedent for the same types of organizations that were established shortly after slavery. . Lincoln, Eric C. and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 242f. In fact, one might conclude that, during reconstruction, these freed Africans were merely seeking to re-establish various aid societies, financial organizations, and work associations that were integral features in their African culture.

Shortly after their arrival, however, they discovered what seemed to be a more cost effective means of labor production in their entrepreneurial activity by way of chattel slavery, which would thereby increase their profits. Hence, they distorted their attempts of having a completely God-centered society, perverted their theology of freedom, adopted a self-centered form of entrepreneurial capitalism, and moved from indentured servitude to being proponents of oppression through African slavery.

As the peculiar institution of American slavery ensued, Africans were forcibly imported into this colonial system of oppression. The displacement of these Africans from their homeland, however, did not mean that they became oblivious to the rich heritage of their people, which included that of entrepreneurship. The West and West Central African victims of the transatlantic slave trade to the Americans came from [a heritage of] complex, organized, and structured market economies in which they participated as producers, traders, brokers, merchants, and entrepreneurs.”⁶⁶ This rich heritage of entrepreneurship made its way to America as unsuspected cargo locked within the minds and hearts of these soon to be African slaves. Without question, “the precolonial Africans’ propensity for trading and marketing constituted a business ethos, which survived the Atlantic passage and consequently provided the foundation for the origin of the African-American business tradition.”⁶⁷

Reconstruction

It would be several hundred years before African American slavery ended and the age of reconstruction began. It is at this point in history that the former slaves sought to

⁶⁶ Ibid., 1.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 2f

realize the freedom that had been so hard won. As a result of their enslavement, they seemed to fundamentally understand that true freedom is only achieved by being economically independent. Consequently, one of the things that Africans sought to do after slavery, in addition to obtaining their physical freedom, was to set about the business of securing their economic independence. They moved to make their emancipation and liberation a reality in this regard through a program of economic development, which eventually manifested itself in the African tradition and spirit of entrepreneurship.

Having said this, let us now examine the economic development of the black church and its community during the age of reconstruction. By doing so, we should be better able to derive how both the black church and the African people in particular utilized entrepreneurship as a form of economic development and empowerment during the era in question.

The Black Church: Reconstruction

During reconstruction, one of the first entrepreneurial undertakings by the black church was the purchasing of land upon which to erect its building shortly after slavery. In point of fact, "it was in order to establish their own churches that [shortly after slavery] Negroes began to pool their meager economic resources and buy buildings and the land on which they stood."⁶⁸ Indeed, from the time of its conception, the black church has been a promoter of entrepreneurial enterprise.⁶⁹ Said differently, entrepreneurship has always been an integral ethos of the black church.

⁶⁸ Frazier and Lincoln, *The Negro Church*, 40ff.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

It was out of such beginnings that the black community saw the arrival of many entrepreneurial ventures. One such venture was the “Freedman’s Savings and Trust Company in 1864, which had ‘the most far-reaching economic influences’ on the black community”⁷⁰ Although this entrepreneurial endeavor eventual failed, it inspired other entrepreneurial activity within the black community, which were also strongly tied to the black church. These entrepreneurial enterprises included benevolent and burial associations along with the first black insurance companies.⁷¹ Indeed, the black church during the era of reconstruction understood that true freedom was strongly correlated to being economically empowered through business entrepreneurship. For this reason, the ecclesiological body of African descendents was instrumental in helping to facilitate economic development in the black community.

The Church: An Educational Model

Most and or all of these endeavors in entrepreneurship were strongly connected to the educational efforts of the church during this time. Said differently, the church both influenced and helped to foster economic development, which included entrepreneurship in particular, through the education of its congregants and the community at large.⁷²

According to Lincoln and Mamiya, after slavery, “no other area of black life received a higher priority from the black church than education.”⁷³ While the importance of education was prevalent during slavery, it was after slavery that access to education

⁷⁰ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 245.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 246f.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 251.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 251ff.

became more accessible for those of African decent. The education for many slaves began in the church, which, in addition to teaching the former slaves to read, both planted the seeds of and nurtured an educational model for economic development through entrepreneurship.⁷⁴

In fact, it is out of this tradition that the cotemporary view of education as a means of upward mobility finds its origin. The basic thrust of this particular form of economic development is that by educating those individuals within the black church and the community, they will be able to gain access to higher paying job opportunities, which upon being hired will produce greater individual economic income. Thus, a high premium is attached to obtaining higher levels of education as a means of economic growth and development.

The Church: Self-Reliance

Another form of economic development espoused by the black church has been in the mode of self-reliance within the black community. In fact, according to Lincoln and Mamiya, the notion of economic inter-relatedness and dependence within the black community is a fundamental aspect of the black church's economic ethic.⁷⁵ The heart of this method for economic development turns on the importance of spending legal tender within one's own community. As a result of black's spending their money within their own community, the economic base of that community should be strengthened and facilitate greater economic growth.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 246f, 251

⁷⁵ Ibid., 240ff.

This notion was very similar to the black church's concept of economic liberation, which "focused on gaining both upward mobility from poverty and eventual economic independence."⁷⁶ Here, the plan was to create and maintain an economic infrastructure that was separate from the economic system of oppression that utilized blacks as chattel commodities (i.e. slaves). The hope was that by doing so blacks, along with their community, could finally free themselves of the yoke that so heinously held them hostage and economically impoverished.

When viewing all of the aforementioned information, we can surmise that it has been through the black church's program of economic development by way of education, self-reliance, and economic liberation that entrepreneurial enterprise was often developed.⁷⁷

Landing Liberation

Like unto the church, so too there were individuals within the cauldron of the American experience who were strong proponents of entrepreneurship as a method of economic freedom. For several of these individuals, this form of liberation began with the procurement of property. Thus, both through and in concert with the black church, many of these men and women petitioned to become landowners in this brave new world of reconstruction as a way of actualizing their emancipation.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 246, also see Frazier and Lincoln, *The Negro Church*, 40.

⁷⁸ Lerone Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America* (Chicago, IL: Johnson Publishing Co., 1987), 222. It is worth mentioning that when we speak of land ownership, we do so with the understanding that ultimately humanity can only be entrepreneurial stewards of the land. Therefore, for the purposes of this treatise, any mentioning of land ownership in particular and or ownership in general should be understood in this manner.

Moreover, entrepreneurship through the procurement of property as a viable means of liberation was readily acknowledged by many throughout the United States during this time. Of these we find men such as Charles Sumner, the famous Frederick Douglass who had strong ties to the black church and its philosophy of economic up-lift,⁷⁹ and Thaddeus Steven who “more than any other man, the freedmen owed their undying faith in the vivid phrase, ‘Forty Acres and a Mule.’”⁸⁰

Thaddeus Stevens

Like unto those blacks who were recently freed, Thaddeus Stevens knew that the freedmen would not truly be able to experience freedom unless they were given the means for an authentic liberation. His view of authentic liberation was through land ownership, which was, for all intents and purposes, business entrepreneurship. This form of clarity that was expressed both by Stevens and the freed blacks still echoes across the landscape of this post-modern era. Although this forty acres and a mule was never given to the blacks, the validity of entrepreneurship as a conduit of economic independence and freedom can not be over-looked.

Fredrick Douglass

In addition, Fredrick Douglass held the sentiment that without a means of economic empowerment and self-sustainability, blacks’ freedom was merely a freedom in word only. Upon one occasion, the mockery of such an empty term without economic power and ownership was highlighted by Douglass when he stated that “the world has

⁷⁹ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 247.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 221, 223ff.

never seen any people turned loose to such destitution as were the four million slaves of the South. . . . They were free! They were free, without roofs to cover them, or bread to eat, or land to cultivate.”⁸¹ In this statement Douglass expressed that freedom without economic power and independence was nothing more than a tragic fallacy.

For all intents and purposes, Frederick Douglass believed that ownership (i.e. entrepreneurial stewardship as defined by this project) was essential to truly realizing the freedom expressed in the Emancipation Proclamation. For those who were unable to obtain their independence from the oppressive system of slavery in the aforementioned fashion, it meant a gradual return to the very system that they sought so eagerly to escape.⁸²

One source cited:

Freedom turned into another kind of slavery, for many slaves were forced to return to their former plantations and ask “ol’ massa” for a job. The former slave owners were happy, of course, to see the ex-slaves return, for the fields needed plowing and the crops planting. Instead of paying the ex-slaves wages, wherever, the former slave owners let them work on “shares.” The plantation owner would provide them with cottonseed, a house, food, and farm tools. Once the crop was harvested, he would take half, plus enough crops to cover the cost of the seed, tools, rent, and food that he had let the ex-slave have. Once the owner had deducted his share and the expenses incurred, what was left was the ex-slaves “share.” Usually, that was nothing.⁸³

This account of the conditions for some slaves during reconstruction illustrates that, without being able to own their own land and resources, the new freedmen found

⁸¹ Douglas Miller, *Frederick Douglass and the Fight for Freedom* (New York: Facts On File Publications, 1988), 124

⁸² John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 179f.

⁸³ Julius Lester, *To Be A Slave* (New York: Scholastic Inc., 1968), 146.

themselves once again oppressed by a different type of slavery.⁸⁴ The aforementioned notwithstanding, there were a few individual blacks and black owned businesses that prospered economically and, consequently, obtained true liberation and freedom.⁸⁵

“There were, according to the Negro Yearbook (1914-1915), two thousand black-owned businesses at the end of the Civil War. By 1903 the number increased to twenty-five thousand. Among these businesses were the first black banks: Capital Savings, which opened in Washington, D.C., in October 1888, and the Savings Bank of the Grand Fountain United Order of The Reformers, which was chartered in March, 1888, and opened in Richmond in April, 1889.”⁸⁶

While these Black owned financial institutions and businesses were more the exception than the rule, the black church, its community, and a significant number of individuals both black and white during the era of reconstruction understood the value of liberation through land procurement and or business entrepreneurship.

Validity through Opposition

This is a truism that was not only recognized by the slaves turned freedmen and the black church, but it was equally recognized by their former oppressors. These nefarious individuals were so aware of the economic necessity of ownership and or entrepreneurship in obtaining ones' true freedom, that they formed the Klu Klux Klan in order to carry out, among other things, a form of economic intimidation and terror.⁸⁷ The former plantation

⁸⁴ Ibid., 144.

⁸⁵ Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower*, 252.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 290f.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 228-248.

owners went to these extremes of terrorism, which still persist to this day, in order to mitigate blacks' ability to ascend the quagmire of enslavement through economic independence and personal entrepreneurship. When understood in this light, one can ascertain that, through their unbridled brutality for the purposes of economic terrorism, even the oppressors during the era of reconstruction knew that freedom is contingent upon economic independence through entrepreneurship.

From our discussion thus far, we can gather that entrepreneurship was widely viewed both inside and outside of the black community as a vital component for authentic liberation. In addition, the black church was indeed influential in both inspiring and nurturing the concept of economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship within the life of its community and those who resided therein.

Post-Reconstruction

After the era commonly known as reconstruction, the African-American community continued to strive towards their economic freedom through the economic development of entrepreneurship. Having said this, let us now examine several individuals who serve as paragons of entrepreneurial enterprise in the post-reconstruction age.

Paragons of Entrepreneurial Enterprise

As in the case of reconstruction, there were those during the post-reconstruction era whose individual manifestations of economic development through entrepreneurship seemed to have been in tandem to that of the black church. To be sure, during the post-reconstruction era, there were several key figures whose ideals for economic uplift could

best be expressed by John Hope when he said that “the salvation of Black America depended, to a great extent, upon the development of a business class.”⁸⁸

Booker T. Washington

It was within the perimeters of this understanding that Booker T. Washington strove to implement an organization that helped to both foster and promote business entrepreneurship within the Black community. This organization became known as the “National Business League.”⁸⁹ Although Washington espoused what many refer to as an accommodationist view,⁹⁰ he understood the basic principle that land and business entrepreneurship were instrumental for the freedom of Black America and sought to make it a reality in his time.

W.E.B. DuBois

Another prominent figure during this era whose work showed a type of entrepreneurship as a means of liberation for blacks was in the person of W.E.B. DuBois. In many ways, his perspectives are still looked upon with admiration. Unlike his contemporary, however, DuBois was not an accommodationist. To the contrary, he believed that we should be more overt in our demands for equality and freedom.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Ibid., 290f.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 292.

⁹⁰ “Any movement for the elevation of the Southern Negro, in order to be successful must to a certain extent gain the cooperation of the Southern Whites. They control government and own the property . . .” Herbert Aptheker, *A Documentary History of The Negro in the United States* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1951), 649

⁹¹ Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower*, 332.

His primary area of concern was in the development of Alexander Crummell's "Talented Tenth," which was to be a group comprised of black intellectuals whose purpose would be to elevate the black race. They were to heighten the level of education among blacks, which would result in their becoming self sufficient with reference to their own leadership and destinies.

Thus, DuBois favored blacks taking ownership of both their own education and their own destinies.⁹² Although his philosophy bespoke intellectual entrepreneurship, it represented an overarching sentiment that black's freedom was inextricably linked to their ability to take primary entrepreneurial stewardship of their destinies and to be self reliant.

Marcus Garvey

In addition to Booker T. Washington and W.E.B DuBois, the philosophy of becoming a people who are economically self reliant through the process of entrepreneurship was a cornerstone for Marcus Garvey. This visionary known as "The Black Moses," sought to address the oppression of blacks by extracting them from their land of oppression and returning them to the homeland of Africa. What is most interesting is the manner by which he sought to transport blacks back to the land of their origin. He set about the task of carrying blacks back to Africa by "incorporating a shipping company [called] the Black Star Line. [Furthermore,] ... he created the largest black political movement in history, establishing hundred of branches of his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) throughout the United Caribbean, and Africa."⁹³ Garvey

⁹²Ibid., 333.

⁹³Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Cornel West, *The African American Century: How Black Americans Have Shaped Our Country* (New York: The Free Press, 2000), 95.

was serious about liberating the Black community and freeing them from oppressive structures.

It is equally worth mentioning that “the UNIA’s Negro Factories Corporations, which operated a chain of business in Harlem, . . . employed over a thousand Harlemites in the early 1920s.”⁹⁴ Based upon the overall examination of his work, we can deduce that, in addition to political activism, Marcus Garvey’s approach to community uplift was one of economic empowerment through business entrepreneurship.

Madam C.J. Walker

Not only were there prominent Black men during this era that were living out a philosophy of economic freedom through entrepreneurship, but there were a few prominent Black women who were making large strides in this regard. One such lady was in the person of Madam C.J. Walker. “She was the first black woman millionaire and one of the first major black entrepreneurs . . . who made a fortune with a line of beauty product in the first decade of twentieth century.”⁹⁵ She was a strong black woman who knew the value of hard work and persistence in trying to realize her goals and aspirations. It could very well be said that she found her opportunity for economic liberation through entrepreneurship. This is clearly demonstrated by the level of success and economic freedom that she was able to obtain as a result of her business venture into the cosmetic and hair product industry.

She was not only concerned for her individual economic freedom, but she was equally concerned for both the financial freedom and self reliance of her community. This

⁹⁴Ibid., 97.

⁹⁵ Bennett, Jr., *Before the Mayflower*, 646.

was evident in her becoming a part of Booker T. Washington's Business League Convention of which she was a very outspoken participant.⁹⁶ It has been said that "more than any other business person, Madame C.J. Walker unveiled the vast economic potential of an African-American economy, even one suffocating under Jim Crow segregation in the South and less rigid but still pernicious forms of oppression in the North."⁹⁷ Without question, this vision of the potential economic empowerment within the African American community as demonstrated through Madame C.J. Walker is strongly rooted in the development of business entrepreneurship.

Maggie L. Walker

Another prominent black woman who showed us the relevance of an economic plan for empowerment through business entrepreneurship was Maggie L. Walker. Her accomplishments in this regard included the operation of "a bank, a printing plant, an office building and other business enterprises."⁹⁸ It was her understanding that business entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency was a key ingredient to personal and communal well-being. While I am sure that there were many other figures from this time in history that could serve to help us understand the relevance of being a business entrepreneur to combat the aggressive oppression of economic depravity, one hopes that the aforementioned have proven to be adequate examples from the post-reconstruction era.

⁹⁶ Gates and West, *African American Century*. As has already been mentioned, Booker T. Washington's Business league was an organization that sought to promote and facilitate entrepreneurship in the black community.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁹⁸ Bennett, *Before the Mayflower*, 291.

The Second Reconstruction

The mid 1900's have been categorized as the second reconstruction due to many of the advances made by African American people. These strides towards realizing the freedom which was espoused by the emancipation proclamation, but undermined by the legislation of Jim Crow laws, were due in no small part to the work of both Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While these two individuals were among many who sought to redress the evils suffered by the African American community, they were of the few who rose to receive national attention for their efforts.

Malcolm X

Malcolm X, generally viewed as a militant of the 1960s, was believed to have been strongly influenced by Marcus Garvey's philosophy of self-sufficiency and separatism.⁹⁹ Encroached in Malcolm's brand of Black Nationalism is the in-expendable and inextricable concept of entrepreneurship. He believed that in order for us as a people to be truly self-sufficient, we must be able to provide our own for our own. This necessarily meant that there had to be proprietors from within our own communities who were business entrepreneurs. To be sure, this is just one piece of his proposed self-sufficiency infrastructure, but it is the most relevant for our discussion.

In his view, when we are able to be independent of the dominant culture's economic influences, we are then able to be free from its oppression. Furthermore, in spite of his personal journey regarding Islam during the latter years of his life along with the

⁹⁹ Gates and West, *African American Century*, 269.

reassessment of his political ideals, his philosophy of self-sufficiency through entrepreneurship as a viable conduit of economic liberation remained unchanged.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr., often viewed as the antithesis to Malcolm X, was one of the leading Civil Rights leaders of the 1960s. Although most of his work was not initially concerned with creating economic self-sufficiency as Garvey or Malcolm espoused, he did recognize the value of economics in the process of empowerment. In fact, he relied heavily upon the economic power of the African American community to under-gird the Alabama bus boycott, which eventually resulted in the desegregation of buses in the state. Furthermore, while economic equality was always one of his concerns in the civil rights movement,¹⁰⁰ toward the end of his life he was beginning to move from primarily focusing on civil injustice to that of focusing more on economic injustice.¹⁰¹

Inasmuch as King's new quest for economic freedom was unfolding in the preparation for his Poor People's Campaign, he was definitely seeking a universal economic empowerment for the oppressed. In light of the fact that the truest form of economic freedom is in the form of entrepreneurship, one can be fairly confident that King's road to economic equality would have led through the terrain of entrepreneurship. In fact, some have proposed that his move towards addressing economic injustice so threatened the structure of economic oppression that it prompted his assassination.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Penguin Publishing, 1964), 24, 90.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 260.

¹⁰²Michael Eric Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You* (New York: Touchstone Publishing, 2000), 77.

In addition to the institution of the black church, along with individuals such as Charles Sumner, Frederick Douglass, Thaddeus Steven, and Booker T. Washington, the list of historical figures who understood and espoused business entrepreneurship as a conduit of economic freedom include W.E. B. Dubois, Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, and Martin L. King, Jr. It is worth mentioning that the black church was either a direct or indirect contributor to the concept of economic development through entrepreneurship as expressed in many of these men's work. Consequently, one can say that the church has historically been highly influential in the economic development through entrepreneurship within the black community.

Based upon the theoretical, biblical, theological, and historical content shared thus far, entrepreneurship seems to stand as a viable theocentric, faith-based initiative to address the economic blight of urban centers. In addition, it appears to provide a justifiable model for urban ministry from a biblical perspective. Of course, the merit of any model must be proven by means of application rather than solely upon its expectation. More to the point, research must be put into action in order to determine its viability. For this reason the task of constructing a research design model is crucial for determining the merit of entrepreneurship as a sufficient means of economic development and empowerment.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN MODEL

Theory in the absence of trial and testing is for all intents and purposes tragic. Far too often, alternatives for redressing the economic plight of those in our communities have been proposed, but unproven as a tangible means of producing the positive outcomes that have been projected. It is for this reason that a model must be both designed and constructed in order to assess the feasibility of entrepreneurship as a viable alternative for economic development and empowerment. By creating such a model, one can adequately examine the aforementioned initiative and determine the extent to which this model can and or should be replicated for universal utilization within the larger context of our nation and the global community at large.

Methodology

The research design model for implementing a faith-based educational initiative for economic development through business entrepreneurship as a vehicle for economic liberation was primarily qualitative in both its scope and orientation. This methodology was chosen because, unlike other approaches, the qualitative method does not take place in a controlled environment. As is generally the case with qualitative research methods, this project was conducted in context, which was more beneficial for the purposes of this

project.¹ Furthermore, this method does not view those in the studies as subjects in a closed-ended experiment, but rather as participants in a revelatory process that was open to mutual discovery.²

Of course, a natural by-product of this process was the fact that the relevance of any discoveries or results from this method was largely interpretative. Although this may have been a weakness of this approach when compared to other more scientific methods, such as the quantitative and mixed methods, which seek to mitigate this variable in the research process, the researcher remained convinced that this apparent weakness was within acceptable margins when viewed against the potential for new revelation and discovery that the qualitative method affords. In addition, by applying a qualitative approach to this project, the researcher was not restricted to one particular facet of discovery because this method “views social phenomenon holistically. . . [which engages in] broad panoramic views rather than micro-analyses.”³

In light of the qualitative method being more broad in scope, open to discovery and interpretation, participatory, and taking place in context rather than in a controlled environment, the researcher was confident that the utilization of this approach was apropos for the research design of this particular project.

¹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2003), 181.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 182

Project Context

The context selected for this project proposal was Amelia, Virginia. This particular context was purposefully chosen, in no small part, due to the economic depravity of the area and the low rate of minority business entrepreneurs.⁴ Therefore, this project proposal was implemented in Amelia, Virginia in order to educate these residents about the economic empowerment accessible through business entrepreneurship. By educating this community in the aforementioned fashion, the overarching objective of enhancing the economic empowerment of this area's residents should be accomplished, while strengthening the economic base of the community and facilitating minority business entrepreneurship.

It was believed that both by showing the people in Amelia the value of being business entrepreneurs from a biblical perspective and providing them with the necessary tools for being a successful entrepreneur that those individuals who are financially impoverished in this area would become more economically empowered and liberated.

Researcher's Assessment

It goes without saying that, as the primary collector of the data, one of the initial steps of the researcher in formulating the design for this project's model was to evaluate the impact that his personal assumption and views would have on his model and its results.⁵ As a fourth generation man of God whose upbringing and experiences included that of community outreach and development, the views and assumptions of the researcher

⁴Ibid., 185.

⁵Ibid., 200f.

were indigenous to and well suited for both this project and the conditions of the community that it sought to address. Through careful examination of his worldviews and ontological understanding of self, the researcher came to conclude that there was the potential for a positive nexus between his experiences and the needs of the community, which he was seeking to redress through this project.

The Research Site

The researcher utilized the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church's facilities to house the project. As the pastor of the aforementioned church and its facilities, the nature of the project was shared with the executive ministry and then the larger church family in order to express the extent to which they as a church family and community would benefit from this project. After sharing this information and having a discussion with the executive ministry, they agreed that it was a ministry project that would benefit both their church and community. Consequently, they expressed the desire to serve and participate as the host site of this project.

Model Implementation

Once the site for this project was firmly established, the researcher contacted all of the area pastors by phone to inform them of the project's aim, goals, and objectives in an effort to elicit their support. After sharing this information with the pastors and obtained their collaboration in this regard, the researcher sent a formal letter of invitation to the pastors and their congregation along with a flier for public announcement, which included the days, time, and place where the conference was to be held.⁶

⁶ For letter and flier, see Appendix A and B respectively.

In addition, all interested parties were required to RSVP their participation in the business entrepreneurship conference at least two weeks in advance.

As a part of the pre-business entrepreneurship conference process, the researcher also offered a three-part sermon series on the theme of entrepreneurship.⁷ This sermon series began exactly three weeks prior to the business entrepreneurship conference. The week following the final message in the sermon series, the project was offered in a two-day conference.

The first day focused on the educating the participants about the biblical relevance of business entrepreneurship as a part of the divine's design for mankind. The second day focused on educating the participants about some of the tools essential for running a successful business. Finally, as a closing activity, the participants were asked to offer their feedback by way of anonymous questionnaires and voluntary interviews as to the impact and effectiveness that this particular educational model has had on their attitudes about business entrepreneurship during the two-day conference.

Collection of Data

The data from the project was collected from the participants who were privy to the conference through both pre and post questionnaires and interviews.⁸ The purposes of the pre-business entrepreneurship conference's questionnaires were to ascertain the participants' status and perspectives economically, racially, and entrepreneurially. The

⁷ For the Sermon Series, see Appendix C. In addition, Appendix D and E contain a sample pre and post-sermon series questionnaire for those who may wish to utilize them for data gathering purposes in the future.

⁸ Creswell, *Research Design*, 166ff.

post-questionnaires, on the other hand, served to provide the researcher with an indication of the degree to which the conference either altered or modified their notions and or attitudes about entrepreneurship as a means of economic empowerment.

The Questionnaires used in this project stratified the participants by sexual orientation, marital status, age, ethnicity, and economic means.⁹ Furthermore, although pre and post questionnaires technically lend themselves to having a longitudinal orientation, the researcher identified this study as primarily being cross-sectional in nature. In an effort to maximize this approach, each questionnaire had a total of sixteen questions with a scale of measurement from one to five with one being the most favorable response and five being the least favorable.

These questionnaires were designed around several themes: entrepreneurship in general, business entrepreneurship in particular, the economic effects of African American slavery, and economic freedom. By focusing on these themes, the researcher was able to obtain a more accurate understanding of the participants' views both before and after the business entrepreneurship conference.

In addition, both the questionnaires categories along with the scales of measurement were clearly listed and demarcated. In order to better ensure the accuracy of the questions being raised of the participants relative to this project, the researcher had a colleague with considerable experience in research design to examine the project proposal along with the questionnaires prior to their being given to this project's participants.

In all of the aforementioned instances, the data was collected in this manner in order to mitigate and or negate any biased influences on the results of this project.

⁹Ibid., 156.

Data Analysis

Based on the analysis of the data collected from those who participated in the project, one was able to obtain a clear and concise understanding of those who were positively impacted by this conference to the extent that they were more educated about entrepreneurship as a vehicle of economic development and liberation. However, in order to obtain an accurate interpretation of this data, the researcher used a modified version of the approach that was recommended by Creswell.¹⁰

The researcher's data analysis consisted of determining how many of the participants that were present actually completed questionnaire instrument. Once this variable was expressed, he then sought to convey the potential response bias that was present as a result of those who did not complete this instrument and the extent to which their lack of data input may have skewed his projects results. After taking these components of the study into account, the researcher began to examine the other variables that were both presented in the data and that were gathered from the information provided by the participants in the questionnaires. In each instance, all of the resulting variables and their attributes, which were expressed by the data, were depicted in tables, charts, and graphs.

For all intents and purposes, this research design was constructed for the Amelia, Virginia residents with the hopes of determining the extent to which this model both can be universally reproduced as an alternative for redressing the economic plight of those in the our communities across the American landscape and the global community at large. It is by utilizing the methodology conveyed in this design that the feasibility of

¹⁰Ibid., 160f.

entrepreneurial education by faith-based communities as a viable alternative for economic development and empowerment was most adequately assessed. While the researcher acknowledges that the design may have been deficient in some regards, he did find it to be sufficient for the purposes of this project. Having said this, let us now examine the findings of this research design that have come to light as a result of this model's methodology.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL: FIELD EXPERIENCE, DATA ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS

In this chapter, the implementation of this model is discussed. First, the researcher offers an account of the field experience. Following the field experience, the data gathered is analyzed and presented. Lastly, the findings of the data presented are conveyed with the hopes of providing clarity as to the effectiveness of the model in question.

Field Experience

After sharing the sermon series as part of the pre-business entrepreneurship conference process,¹ the entrepreneurship conference was conducted the following Friday evening and Saturday morning respectively. On Friday evening, prior to their arrival, the researcher made sure that the participants had all of the supplies that they would need while experiencing the conference. To that end, he purchased pens, pads, and larger envelopes for each participant. He then arrived at the church one hour early with these supplies in order to put together these packets of supplies. In addition to putting these supplies in each packet for the participants, the researcher included a bibliography of all the resource material to which he would be referring throughout the conference.

¹ As has been mentioned, for the Sermon Series, see Appendix C. In addition, Appendix D and E contain a sample pre and post-sermon series questionnaire for those who may wish to utilize them for data gathering purposes in the future.

After putting together what he believed would be a sufficient amount of packets for the participants, the researcher then set about the task of setting up the sanctuary for the conference. Along with performing microphone checks and placing a podium in the proper location for the conference, the researcher made sure that the lighting and other environmental conditions were conducive for the dissimulation and the retention of information. Coupled with his efforts, the researcher was fortunate enough to have a context associate in the person of Sis. Ruffin who was instrumental in setting up the registration table and providing the sign-in sheets for the participants who were present.²

Once the participants arrived and ample time was allotted for any latecomers, the researcher had a deacon who was present offer devotion by way of scripture and prayer. Upon his completion of the devotion, the researcher assumed control of the conference and began by having one of the contextual associates distribute pre-entrepreneurship conference questionnaires to each participant.³ As they completed the questionnaires, the contextual associate collected the apparatus and placed them in a safe location.

Once the last questionnaire was both completed and collected, the researcher began his presentation. He started by sharing the theoretical research that had been compiled regarding entrepreneurship. As he lectured, he was careful to periodically ask if there were any questions and or comments about the material that was being shared. This was the method that was employed by the researcher for all of the information being disseminated with this group. After conveying the theoretical information, the researcher shared the biblical, theological, and historical material in like fashion.⁴

² The sign-in sheet is located in Appendix G.

³ For conference pre-questionnaire, see Appendix H.

⁴ The lecture outline can be found in Appendix J.

Throughout the entire lecture Friday evening, the participants seemed to be both engaged and informed by the fruits of the researcher's labor. It was noted that they often asked questions that probed the issues and made comments that bespoke a deep comprehension of the research. Indeed, it was very rewarding to see the participants being enlightened by the theoretical, biblical, theological, and historical presentation provided by the researcher. After the lecture, there was an overall question and answer period after which the researcher thanked the participants for coming and had a parting prayer. This concluded Friday night's phase of the entrepreneurial conference.

Saturday morning, the conference resumed with scripture and prayer. Once the scripture and prayer were given, the researcher extended greetings and a brief recap of Friday night's material. Then, he introduced the participants to the guest speaker for the morning in the person of Dr. Leonard Edloe. The introduction of this speaker included the researcher citing, among other things, this guest speaker's calling as a man of God, his many years of entrepreneurial experience, and his position as the first black chairman of the merchant retail association of the Richmond metropolitan area.⁵

Upon finishing the introduction of the guest speaker, the researcher invited the participants to receive him with a round of applause. While the participants applauded, Dr. Edloe rose and approached the podium in order to give his presentation on entrepreneurship. After a few opening remarks of his own, he began to share his information with the participants. Dr. Edloe's style of dissemination was open and inviting. Those who were present were invited to ask questions and dialogue with him at any time. Generally speaking, Dr. Edloe shared some of the current problems that are

⁵ For a more detailed biography of Dr. Edloe, see Appendix K.

prevalent in the black community, which included, but were not limited to, the economic disparities and entrepreneurial deficiencies, that exist among those of African American decent.

Then, Dr. Edloe moved to show the importance of entrepreneurship as a means of economic development and empowerment. He was clear that there were several things to be considered when seeking to be an entrepreneur. First, he encouraged the participants who wanted to be business entrepreneurs to only do so with reference to that which they loved. He then informed them about the importance of acquiring the skills necessary to properly manage the particular entrepreneurial enterprise of their desire. Dr. Edloe encouraged them to acquire these skills by way of education, various forms of internships, and or employment in the particular business of interest. At this point, it was clear that the participants were in full appreciation of Dr. Edloe's experience and expertise in this regard.

After discussing the importance of the aforementioned variables when seeking to become an entrepreneur, Dr. Edloe then began to talk about financing, financial analysis, debt reduction, and long range planning. As he talked about these areas of concern, the participants were very inquisitive and contributed greatly to further dialogue and in depth discussions. Indeed, the conversations between Dr. Edloe and the participants were very exciting and inspiring. In fact, the participants were so engaged that the time allotment for the business entrepreneurship conference seemed to have quickly become depleted.

When he became aware that his time was running out, Dr. Edloe opened the floor for a general question and answer session. As before, the participants took advantage of his expertise and seemed to be greatly informed thereby. During this session, the question was raised about securing funding for business entrepreneurship start-up, to which Dr.

Edloe was very candid in saying, “that is the hard part.” He then proceeded to offer various recommendations for obtaining funds. One such suggestion involved creating a ministry that would seek out funding within the church and its community in order to serve as an avenue of funding for small business start-ups. This suggestion was very much in keeping with the spirit of this project and its notions of self-sufficiency and self-sustainability. Dr. Edloe took a few more questions and then concluded his presentation.⁶

Following the conclusion of his presentation, all of those who were present gave Dr. Edloe a great round of applause and he took his seat. Upon his being seated, the researcher rose to publicly thank Dr. Edloe for coming, sharing, and inspiring the participants with regards to business entrepreneurship. As the researcher scanned the crowd, he could not help but notice the general expression of satisfaction upon the faces of each participant.

After sharing a few more words of thanks for Dr. Edloe’s coming and sharing, the researcher, along with the contextual associates, issued the participants a post-questionnaire.⁷ Each participant was given ample time to complete their questionnaire, which was then collected and stored by the contextual associates. Once all of the questionnaires were collected and stored, the research thanked the participants and asked them to stand for a closing prayer and benediction.

Data Analysis

Having completed the business entrepreneurship conference, the researcher undertook the monumental task of analyzing the data that both the pre and post-

⁶ Dr. Edloe’s lecture in its entirety can be found in Appendix L.

⁷ See Appendix I.

questionnaires provided. Although the participants were issued a questionnaire both before and after the entrepreneurship conference, the apparatus remained the same. In other words, they were given the same questionnaire in both instances. By having them respond to the same apparatus both before and after the entrepreneurship conference, any changes in the participants' views and or perspectives could be ascertained. It is equally worth mentioning that for both the pre and the post-questionnaires, the extent to which the participants agreed and or disagreed was measured by using a Likert Scale. With all of this in mind, we are now ready to share the data that these questionnaires provided.

Theological Views of Entrepreneurship

The first group of items on the questionnaire sought to assess the participant's theological views of entrepreneurship before the conference and to uncover any changes in those

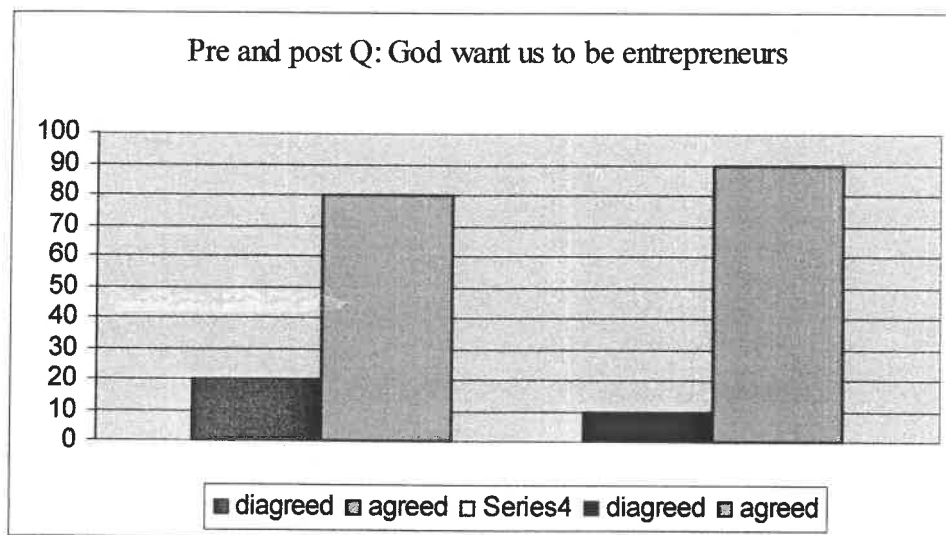


Figure 1: God wants us to be entrepreneurs

views after the conference was over. The first statement under this theological rubric, which expressed that God wants us to be entrepreneurs, provided some interesting data. In the pre-questionnaires, twenty (20) percent disagreed, while eighty (80) percent agreed.

In the post-questionnaires, however, the data showed a decrease in those that disagreed from twenty (20) percent to ten (10) percent. In addition, the post questionnaire revealed that ten (10) percent of the participants had become undecided. Lastly, those who agreed remained unchanged.

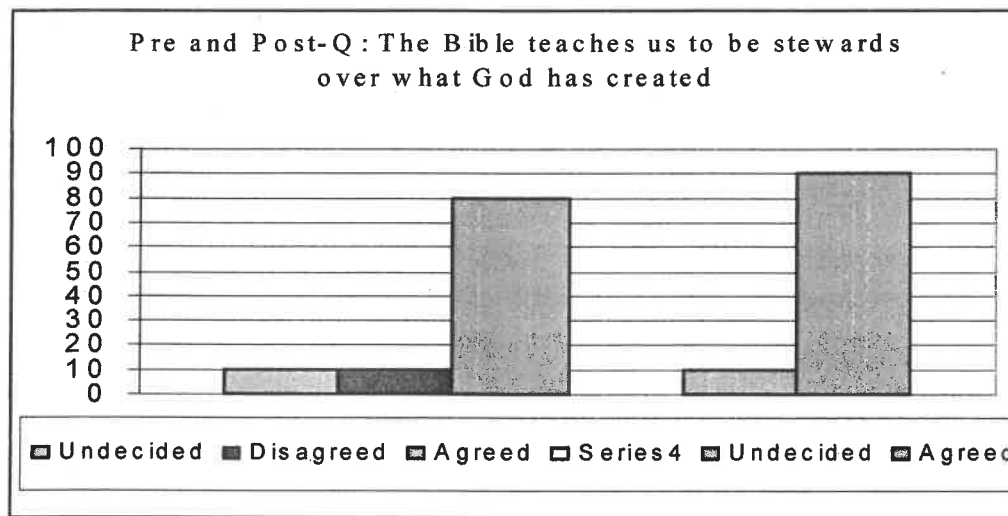


Figure 2: The Bible teaches us to be stewards over what God has created

For the second item (the bible teaches us to be stewards over what God has created), initially ten (10) percent disagreed, ten (10) percent were undecided, and 80 percent agreed. After the entrepreneurship conference, ten (10) percent were undecided and ninety 90 percent agreed. This shows that there was both a ten (10) percent increase in those who agreed with this statement and a one hundred (100) percent decrease in those who disagreed with this statement after being exposed to the entrepreneurship conference.

When asked to respond to the statement that entrepreneurship is a form of stewardship, twenty (20) percent disagreed and eighty (80) percent agreed in the pre-questionnaire. To the contrary, when given the post-questionnaire, ten (10) percent were undecided and ninety (90) percent agreed. From this data, it can be concluded that there was a one-hundred (100) percent reduction of those who disagreed before the

entrepreneurship conference, a ten (10) percent increase in those who were undecided, and a ten (10) percent increase in those who came to agree with this view.

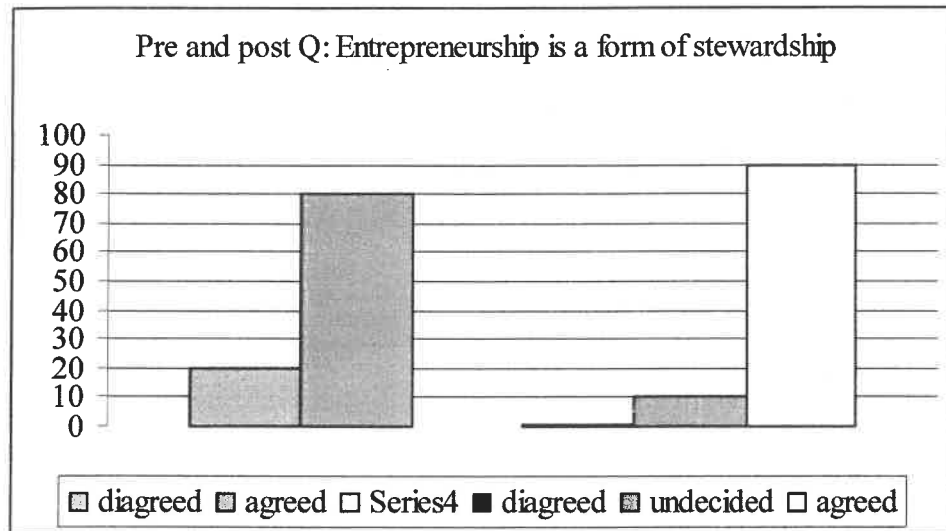


Figure 3: Entrepreneurship is a form of stewardship

In an effort to further ascertain the validity of the previous response, the participants were presented with a negative version of the same statement, which was that, “entrepreneurship is not a form of stewardship.” When presented with this statement in the pre-questionnaire, ten (10) percent of the respondents disagreed, thirty (30) percent were undecided, and sixty (60) percent agreed. On the other hand, the post-questionnaire after the conference showed that ten (10) percent were undecided and ninety (90) percent disagreed. In the instance of this statement, there was a twenty (20) percent decrease in those who were undecided. For those who agreed, there was a hundred (100) percent reduction. Finally, when comparing the ninety (90) percent of those who came to disagree with this notion after the conference to the ten (10) percent who disagreed with his notion before the conference, it can be surmised that there was an eighty (80) percent positive shift of those who came to disagree with this stated point of view.

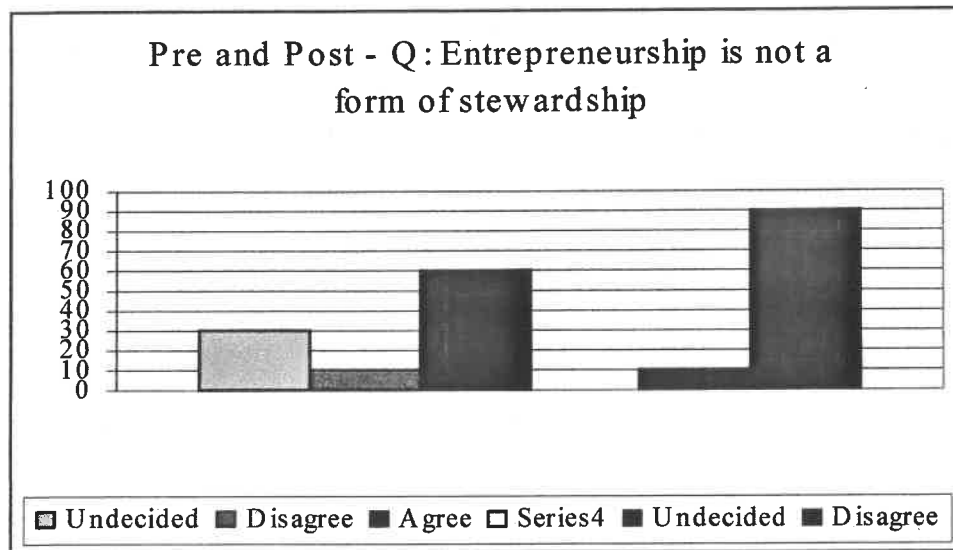


Figure 4: Entrepreneurship is not a form of stewardship.

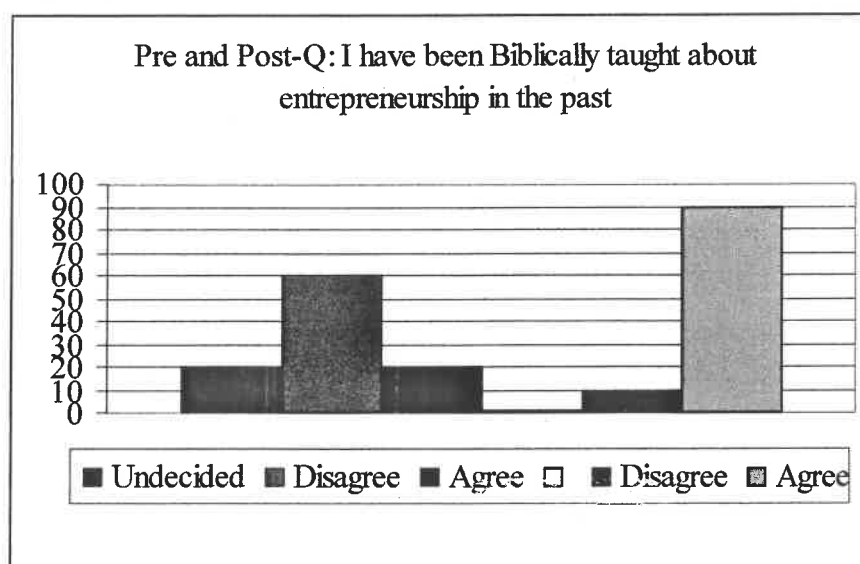


Figure 5: I have been Biblically taught about entrepreneurship in the past

When given the statement, "I have been biblically taught about entrepreneurship in the past," the pre-questionnaire data showed that twenty (20) percent were undecided, sixty (60) percent disagreed, and twenty (20) percent agreed. Upon experiencing the conference, the post-questionnaires revealed that none were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and ninety (90) percent agreed. Based on the data, there was a twenty (20)

percent decrease in those who were undecided, a fifty (50) percent decrease in those who disagreed, and a seventy (70) percent increase in those who agreed.

General View of Entrepreneurship

Having gathered the data regarding the theological view of the participants about entrepreneurship and the extent to which those views were altered as a result of the conference, we then sought to uncover some of the participant's general views of entrepreneurship.

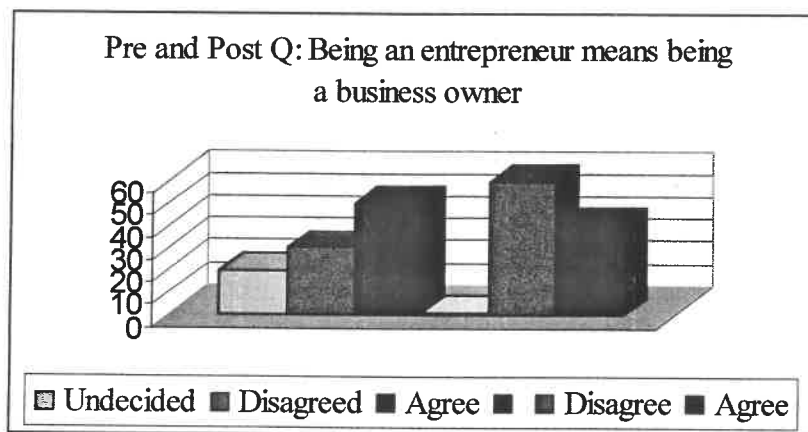


Figure 6: Being an entrepreneur means being a business owner

One of the first statements to be measured under this section to assess the participant's general views about entrepreneurship expressed that "Being an entrepreneur means to be a business owner." Based on their responses to this statement, it was discovered that twenty (20) percent were undecided, thirty (30) percent were disagreed, and fifty (50) percent agreed. However, after the conference the results were that none were undecided, sixty (60) percent disagreed, and forty (40) percent agreed. This means that after being exposed to the conference and its material, there was a (20) percent

decrease in those who were undecided, a thirty (30) percent increase in those who disagreed, and a ten (10) percent decrease in those who agreed.

In the next stated item, “entrepreneurship is an act of service,” the pre-questionnaire depicted that twenty (20) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent

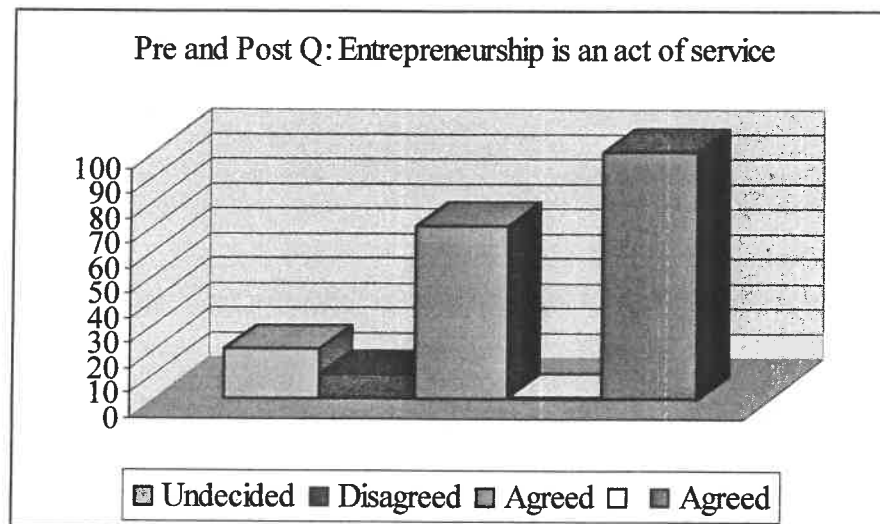


Figure 7: Entrepreneurship is an act of service

disagreed, and seventy (70) percent agreed. To the contrary, the post-entrepreneurship conference questionnaire showed that one hundred (100) percent of the participants were in total and full agreement with this statement. This necessarily means that those who originally were both undecided and disagreed with this statement later combined for a thirty (30) percent shift in favor of this view and or perspective.

Finally, the respondents were asked to measure the extent to which they agreed and or disagreed with the view that “being an entrepreneur is not a top priority in my life.” It was found that twenty (20) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and seventy (70) percent agreed. After the conference, the data showed that none were undecided, fifty (50) percent disagreed, and fifty (50) percent agreed.

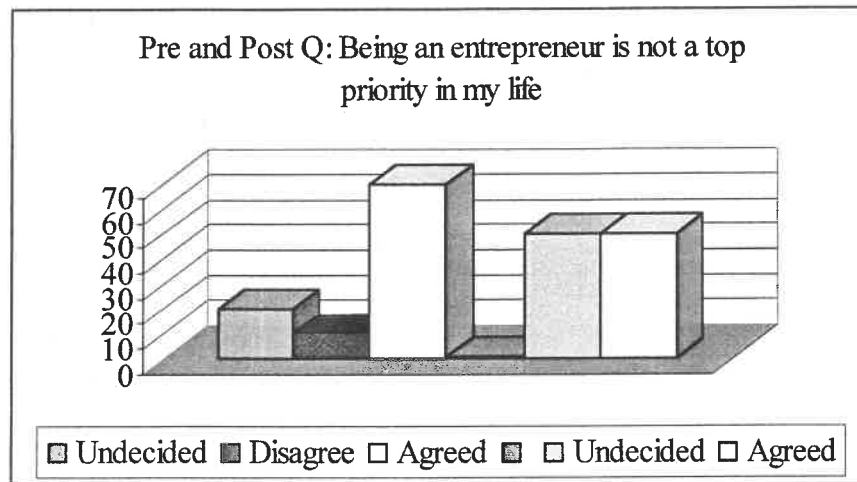


Figure 8: Being an entrepreneur is not a top priority in my life

Based on this data, there was a twenty (20) percent decrease in those who were undecided, a forty (40) percent increase in those who disagreed, and a twenty (20) percent decrease in those who agreed with this point of view.

Views of Business Entrepreneurship

Having examined some of the participants' general views about entrepreneurship, we still had not addressed how these individuals viewed business entrepreneurship. Consequently, it was necessary to determine their views about business entrepreneurship in particular.

For the statement, "If I become a business entrepreneur my economic well-being will improve," the pre-questionnaire showed that seventy (70) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and twenty (20) percent agreed. Following the conference, there were fifty (50) percent who were undecided and (50) percent who disagreed. This means that there was a twenty percent reduction of those who were undecided, a one-hundred (100) percent reduction of those who disagreed, and a thirty (30) percent increase of those who agreed with this statement.

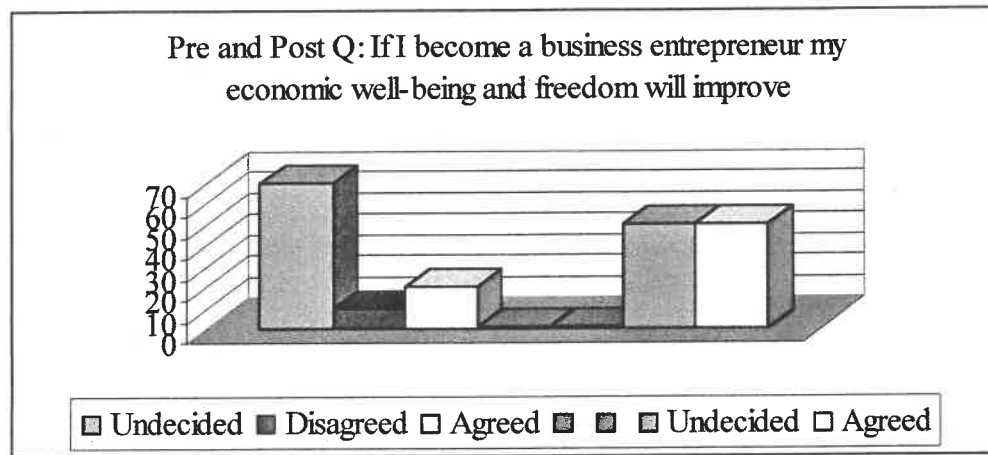


Figure 9: If I become a business entrepreneur my economic well-being and freedom will improve

The Effects of Slavery and Segregation on African American Entrepreneurship

Next, the participants were asked about the extent to which they agreed and or disagreed with several statements that were designed to measure their views regarding the effects of slavery and segregation on African American entrepreneurship.

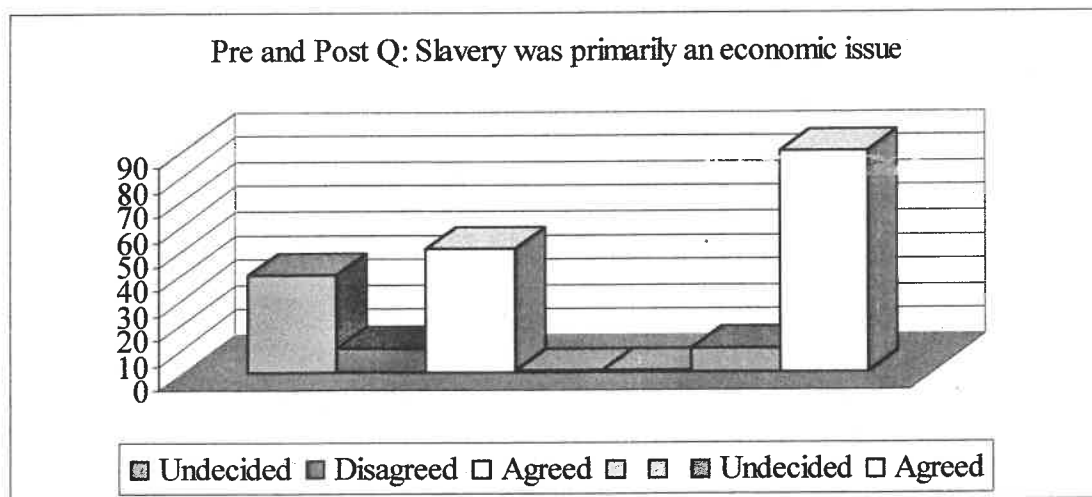


Figure 10: Slavery was primarily an economic issue

When asked to respond to the first item, which was that “slavery was primarily an economic issue,” the pre-questionnaire showed that forty (40) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and fifty (50) percent agreed. On the other hand, the post-questionnaires issued after the conference exhibited that ten (10) percent were undecided and that ninety (90) percent agreed. When comparing the forty (40) percent of those who were undecided before the conference with the ten percent of those who were undecided after the conference, we can gather that there was a thirty (30) percent reduction in those who were undecided as a result of the conference. In addition, when juxtaposing the ten (10) percent who disagreed prior to the conference with the zero (0) percent of those who disagreed after the conference, the data showed a one hundred (100) percent reduction of those who disagreed. Finally, in light of the fifty (50) percent who agreed pre-conference and the ninety (90) percent who agreed post-conference, there was a forty (40) percent increase in those who later agreed with this statement.

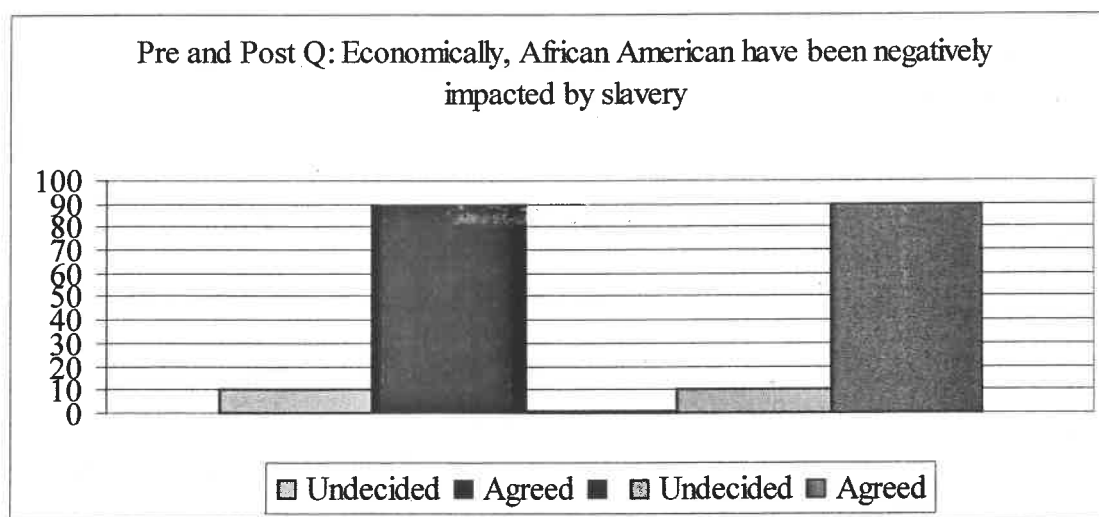


Figure 11: Economically, African Americans have been negatively impacted by slavery

“Economically, African Americans have been negatively impacted by slavery” was the next assertion to which the participants were asked to respond. To this item, ten (10)

percent were initially undecided, none disagreed, and (90) percent agreed. After the conference, the post-questionnaire showed that there were no changes in the participants' views.

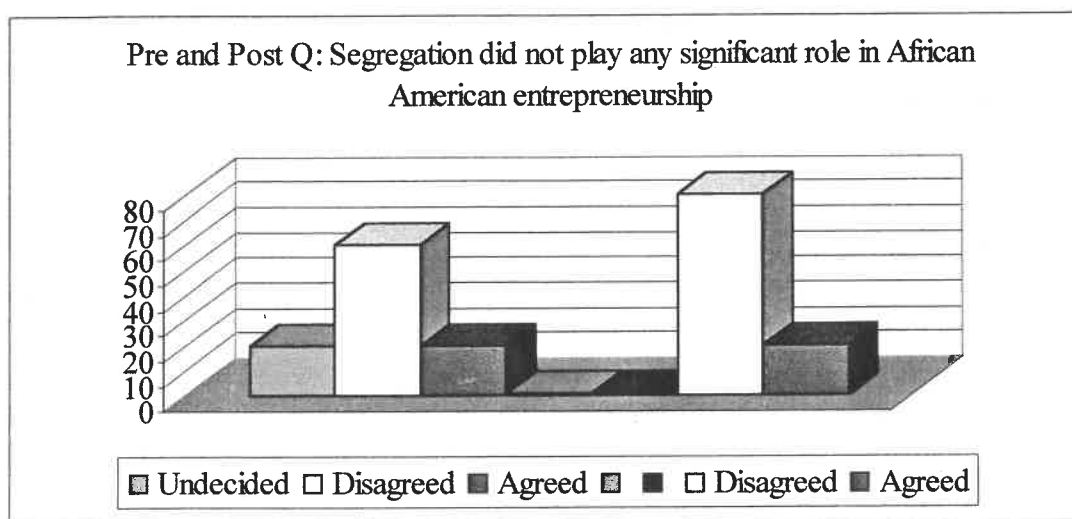


Figure 12: Segregation did not play any significant role in African American entrepreneurship

The same was not true for the next item that stated “segregation did not play any significant role in African American entrepreneurship.” According to the pre-questionnaire, twenty (20) percent were undecided, sixty (60) percent disagreed, and twenty (20) percent agreed. To the contrary, after the entrepreneurship conference, none were shown to be undecided, eighty (80) percent disagreed, and (20) percent agreed. Thus, the conference reduced the number of those who were undecided about this statement by one hundred (100) percent, it increased those who disagreed by twenty (20) percent, and those who agreed remained constant.

When responding to the claim that “integration did not affect African American entrepreneurship,” thirty (30) percent was undecided, sixty (60) percent disagreed, and ten (10) percent agreed. Following the entrepreneurship conference, ten (10) percent were

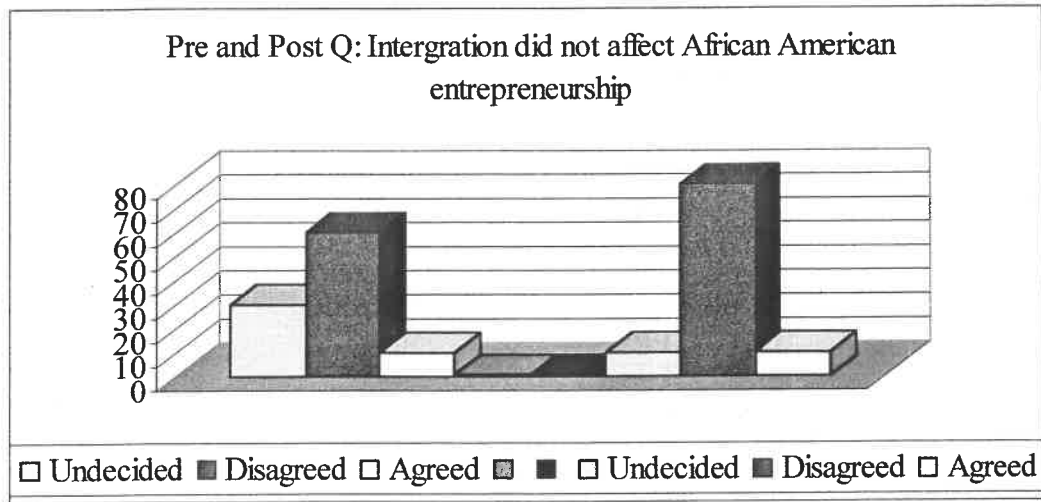


Figure 13: Integration did not affect African American entrepreneurship

undecided, eighty (80) percent disagreed, and ten (10) percent agreed. Therefore, we can say that there was a twenty (20) percent reduction in those who were undecided, a twenty (20) percent increase in those who disagreed, and those who agreed remained unchanged.

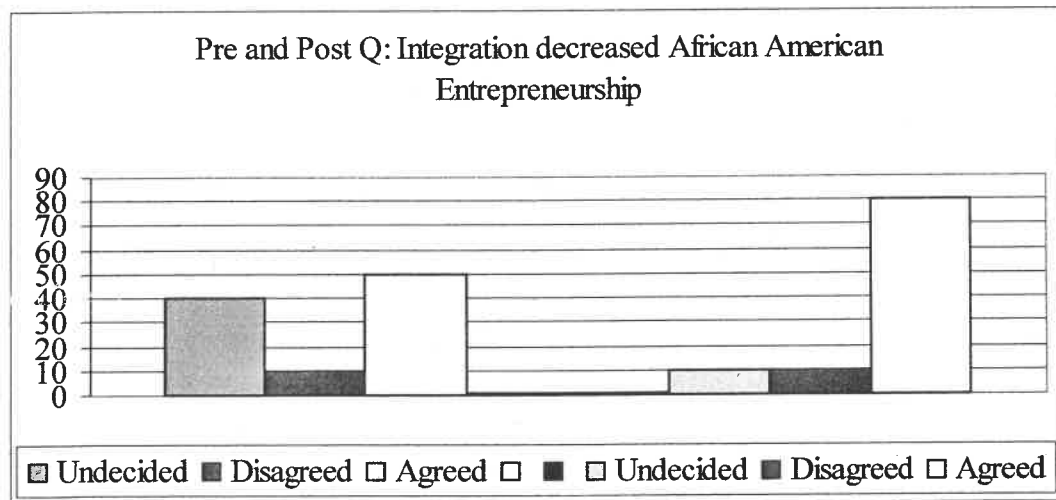


Figure 14: Integration decreased African American entrepreneurship

Another variation of the aforementioned statement (i.e. integration decreased African American entrepreneurship) was posed to the participants. To this statement, forty (40) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and fifty (50) percent agreed.

However, the post-questionnaire showed that, after the conference, only ten (10) percent were undecided, ten (10) percent disagreed, and eighty (80) percent agreed. Thus, there was a thirty (30) percent reduction in those who were undecided, while those who disagreed remained constant. Furthermore, there was a thirty (30) percent increase in those who agreed.

General Views of Economic Freedom

The last thematic grouping that was presented on the questionnaires sought to measure the participants' general views of economic freedom. It is with this in mind that we will now examine the data provided by the participants.

Under this theme, the participants were asked to respond to the statement that "there is a relationship between entrepreneurship and economic freedom." To this statement, the pre-questionnaire showed that thirty (30) percent were undecided, none

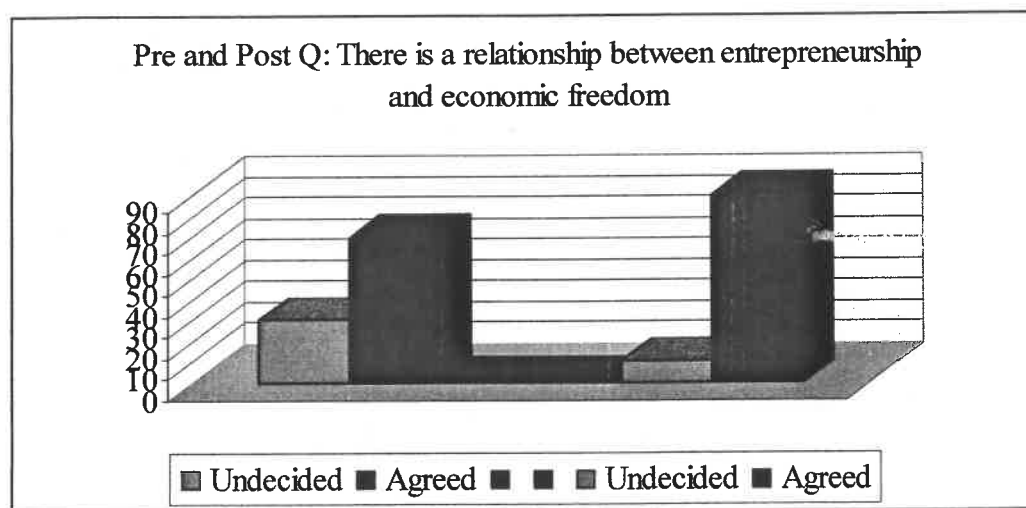


Figure 15: There is a relationship between entrepreneurship and economic freedom disagreed, and seventy (70) percent agreed. After experiencing the entrepreneurship conference, the post-questionnaire revealed that ten (10) percent were undecided and

ninety (90) percent agreed. Based on this data, those who were undecided decreased by twenty (20) percent, those who disagreed remained unchanged, and those who agreed increased by twenty (20) percent.

Finally, the participants were asked to consider that “stewardship is a form of economic liberation.” In response to this assertion, the pre- questionnaire showed that

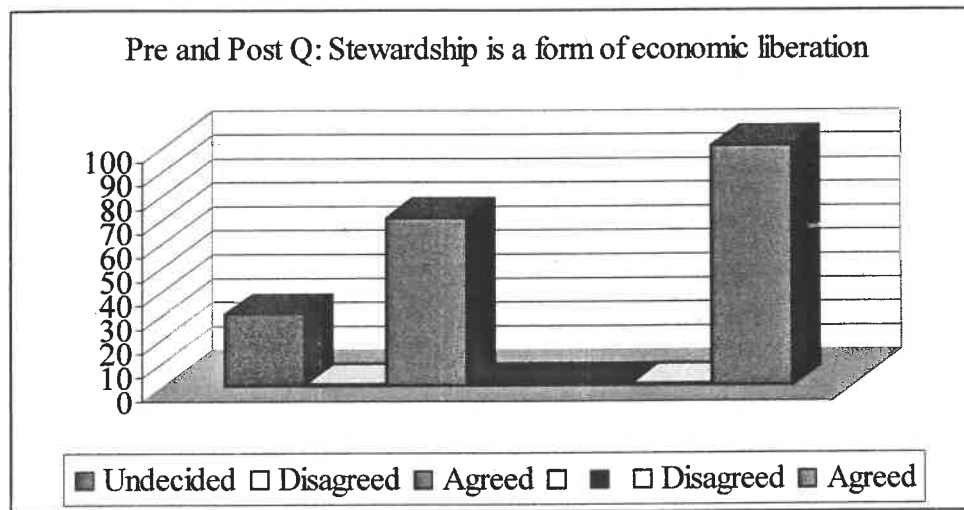


Figure 16: Stewardship is a form of economic liberation

thirty (30) percent of the respondents were undecided, none disagreed, and seventy (70) percent agreed. After experiencing the entrepreneurship conference, the post-questionnaire data showed that none were undecided, none disagreed, and one hundred (100) percent agreed. This means that, while those who disagreed remained constant, there was a one-hundred (100) percent reduction in those who were undecided and a thirty (30) percent increase in those who agreed.

Thus far we have depicted the data that was collected from the entrepreneurship conference both before and after its implementation. Let us now review the findings.

Findings

Based upon the data that was gathered from the pre and post-questionnaires, the researcher was able to ascertain the extent to which the participants became more informed about the empowering nature of economic development through entrepreneurship. By and large, the results of the entrepreneurship conference suggest that the participants were positively impacted by this faith-based educational model for economic development through entrepreneurship.

According to the data, from ten (10) to forty (40) percent of those who participated in the entrepreneurship conference were influenced affirmatively by this model. This means that a significant amount of those who experienced this conference were enlightened about entrepreneurship as a means of economic empowerment in a way that they had not been before the conference.

With reference to the participants' theological views of entrepreneurship, there was a positive change of ten (10) to twenty (20) percent regarding those came to agree that entrepreneurial stewardship in general was and is a part of God's divine design for humanity. It is worth mentioning that those who thought that they had been taught this biblical principle before the conference versus after the conference increased by seventy (70) percent.

Furthermore, when examining the impact that this conference had on the participants' general views about entrepreneurship, the data showed that there was a positive effect. According to the statistics, approximately thirty (30) percent of the participants came to view entrepreneurship as a service provided in the form of stewardship rather than ownership. Overall, as a result of this conference, the data showed

a positive swing of forty (40) percent with reference to those who came to view entrepreneurship as being a top priority in their lives. In addition, there was a thirty (30) percent increase in the participants who came to see business entrepreneurship as a means of economic well-being.

Under the next theme, the participants' notions about the effects that slavery and segregation had on African American entrepreneurship were evaluated. As in all of the other cases, the conference had an affirmative effect on the aforementioned views of the participants. The data showed that, after the conference, there was a forty (40) percent increase in those who came to agree with the statement that slavery was primarily an economic issue. In addition, the participants exhibited a twenty (20) to thirty (30) positive shift in recognizing the role and or the adverse effect that integration had on African American entrepreneurship.

Lastly, we evaluated the results from the data as it pertained to the effect that the entrepreneurship conference had on the participants' views of economic freedom in general. When analyzing the data about the supposition that there is a correlation between economic freedom and entrepreneurship, there was a decisive shift of twenty (20) percent in those who came to agree with this statement after the conference was over. Furthermore, when we measured the extent to which the participants agreed with the view that stewardship was a form of economic freedom, the data reflected a thirty (30) percent positive increase of those who came to affirmatively endorse this concept and notion.

Based upon these questionnaire findings, it can be concluded that the entrepreneurship conference positively impacted the participants in every area of specified measurement. In addition, it was interesting to find that this conference had its greatest positive influence upon the participants in three main ways: their coming to view slavery

as primarily being an economic issue, their becoming more biblically educated about entrepreneurship, and their making entrepreneurship a top priority in their lives.

Interviews

Along with analyzing the data that was gathered from the questionnaires during the business entrepreneurship conference, the researcher sought to evaluate the effectiveness of this conference by way of personal interviews with several of the participants. Here are the findings from these interviews.

Participant 1

Interviewer: What were your general feelings about the conference?

Participant 1: I thought that it was very good with reference to the days that were chosen and the way it was arranged.

Interviewer: Did you feel that the information was in depth enough Friday to prepare you for Saturday?

Participant 1: Yes it was. I thought that it was really good because it prepared us for what would happen the next day. A lot of times, when people have a conference like this, you feel as though you are just thrown into it without really understanding it. So, you prepared us for Saturday when you shared with us Friday night. For me, Saturday brought it all together.

Interviewer: How about the Saturday phase in particular? How well did you enjoy that phase of the conference?

Participant 1: I enjoyed it very much because it made me think about a lot of things in my life that I would like to change as far as some day working for myself. Also, I have

been looking at different ways to improve my credit in order to help me to go into business for myself. So, yes it was very good.

Interviewer: Regarding the conference as a whole, would you say that it had a positive impact upon you?

Participant 1: Yes it did; it had a very positive impact.

Interviewer: How enlightened did you become as a result of the conference information?

Participant 1: I was very enlightened. I think that the interesting part was more or less being asked certain questions that I thought I knew the answers to. But as it all came together and I had to answer the questions again, I felt that I had more knowledge and that I was more prepared to answer the questions then I was before. Before, I looked at entrepreneurship from a worldly perspective, but when you tied it in to the church, I realized that in order for a business to be successful, you have to have God in it and in everything that you do. That is what I got out of it.

Interviewer: Is there anything that you would suggest to be done in order to improve the conference?

Participant 1: I do not think that there are any improvements that can be done.

Interviewer: Well, is there anything that could have been clearer in order to help the next person that may experience the conference?

Participant 1: No, not for me. I think that it was done very well; honestly. I do not see anything that should be done differently. It was well presented and it was put in a way that I could learn and understand.

Interviewer: Thank you very much.

Participant 2

Interviewer: How did you feel about the overall presentation of this project?

Participant 2: I thought that the information was outlined perfectly. I especially liked how you tied in your information from the first session with Dr. Edloe who was a business owner in the last session. It all flowed very well.

Interviewer: With reference to the information that you received, how transformative and impactful was the piece about biblical entrepreneurship?

Participant 2: Actually, it was an eye opener for me. You always hear about business ownership and talk about it being financially driven, but never tying in the biblical aspect of how entrepreneurship was what God wanted for us. So, it tied the two together; it connected entrepreneurship with the biblical principles of why we should be business entrepreneurs.

Interviewer: Now about that Saturday morning. How did you feel about the information that Dr. Edloe provided?

Participant 2: The information that he gave tied into the whole outline of your project. In other words, it was like a living example. It drew from the business world and the sound biblical background that Dr. Edloe has put into practice in his work. It all tied in and fit together well; he echoed what you had already outlined in all of your documentation.

Interviewer: Regarding ministry and entrepreneurship, are you able to see entrepreneurship as a form of ministry now that you have experienced this conference?

Participant 2: Absolutely. I do not think that you can do one without the other. I think it tied in very well. I can say that as an African Americans female, I always thought

about financially having the money to do these things without thinking about the biblical principles involved. In ministry, you have to have it; it all just made sense and tied together.

Interviewer: One last question. Personally speaking, can you see where this project has moved you to reexamine how you can become entrepreneurial in a way that perhaps you either had not considered before or did not have the type of tools to do so previously?

Participant 2: I have always had a vision, but this project helped me to realize that I could put my vision into practice. For example, a vision of mine is to take a young person along with my gifting ministry from a biblical aspect and help them to become an entrepreneur. One young person I know in particular is a mechanic at heart and this project has help me to outline how I can assist him to go into this type of business as he grows and matures.

Interviewer: Are there any ways that you believe that the conference could have been improved?

Participant 2: I would have liked to have had a couple of more hours or maybe an additional half of a day with Dr. Edloe's piece on finding the funding for business projects.

Interviewer: Thank you.

Participant 3

Interviewer: How did you feel about the overall conference presentation?

Participant 3: Well, in my opinion it was very, very structured.

Interviewer: How did you feel about the information you received?

Participant 3: I felt that I got a lot of good information, but I am a very relaxed person so I learn better in a more relaxed atmosphere than I do in a structured atmosphere, although the instruction was very good.

Interviewer: How did you feel about the material?

Participant 3: The material was good.

Interviewer: Did the biblical information about entrepreneurship provide you with perhaps a new way of looking at entrepreneurship, as you had not done so before?

Participant 3: Very much so because I never associated the bible with entrepreneurship. It is the truth. I never associated the bible's principles with entrepreneurship. The bible to me was a way to work through my life, but I never saw the bible teaching about entrepreneurship as a way of doing my everyday life. The bible, entrepreneurship, and doing my everyday life never connected with me before now. Entrepreneurship to me was a worldly thing, but the conference helped me to make the connection between entrepreneurship and what the bible teaches. I got a lot out of just associating the different principles. Even in some of the things that I am reading now, I am getting the two connections. For instance, in the case of Moses, I never thought of him in that light, but now I see him as an entrepreneur. Joseph is another example. I can now see him as an entrepreneur when he went to Egypt and made all of the calculation for the grain and built the barns for it to be stored. Now I can see how this connected with entrepreneurship.

Interviewer: That is good.

Participant 3: Yeah, if you listened, as you read different bible stories, you can see entrepreneurship where you had not seen it before. You can say, "oh, ok, alright, I can see it now."

Interviewer: Well, I appreciate that because I had not used Joseph in my biblical piece, but I am going to remember to use him next time.

Interviewer: Do you see the connection between entrepreneurship and ministry?

Participant 3: With me, it has always been the case, but I did not think of it that way until I experienced the conference. I did not have a business per se, but what money I received from making cakes I would use to see how I could help somebody else. Now I see that I was ministering to others through business entrepreneurship. After hearing Dr. Edloe, I have been looking at what it takes to make the cakes, how to set a price for the cakes, and then looking to see what I can do with the money to help somebody else.

Interviewer: That's great, which brings me to Saturday. How did you feel about the information that Dr. Edloe provided Saturday?

Participant 3: He got me to the relaxed stage. He gave me the information, but he relaxed it and brought it on down to my level. It helped me to hear it in a relaxed way and in everyday terms.

Interviewer: To what extent if any has this project inspired you to be an entrepreneur?

Participant 3: I have already checked into office management. I am hoping to take one management class for now. You cannot do anything until you learn the management end of it first. So, I am basically doing what he told me. He said that you will not do it unless you get up and try, so that is what I am doing.

Interviewer: That is just wonderful. Lastly, what could have been done in order to improve the business conference?

Participant 3: I needed that piece that showed me how to go and do it. I did not get the connection for how to get the information I needed to actually do the

entrepreneurship. It would have been good to know how to get started. Things like, where do you go to get financial backing for the business? Who do you see; what institutions are out there? He told us what the goal was, but he did not tell us quite as much about how to get there.

Interviewer: Actually, that is what the next phase of this project will hopefully accomplish, but it could not be included at this point because it would have been too big to accomplish within the limited window of time available.

Interviewer: I thank you, my dear.

SUMMARY

As in the case of the questionnaires' findings, the aforementioned interviews show that, by and large, the business entrepreneurship conference was positively impactful. All participants interviewed expressed being both enlightened and inspired with reference to entrepreneurship in general and business entrepreneurship in particular. With the findings having been discussed, it is time for us to hear the conclusion of the matter.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

By and large, the researcher found this project to be both gratifying and edifying. It has been quite revealing to see how God brought the researcher and his context together for the purpose of economic development through the creation of an educational model for entrepreneurship. Furthermore, uncovering the state of the art in this ministry project and the foundational premise upon which this work was based has been extremely revelatory. After making sure that the project was on a solid foundation, the researcher had the privilege of designing a model by which to test the project. This process was most informative and inspiring. The researcher found that the methodology which was selected served to provide the data needed in a most adequate fashion. Of course, everyone enjoys seeing something that they have researched and designed becoming a reality. The only thing better than seeing what you have researched and designed becoming a reality is to find that the project had a positive outcome.

It is for this reason that the researcher was rather pleased to find that this project was success in every field of measurement. Though not a panacea, it has proven, within a reasonable margin of error, that a faith-based educational initiative for economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship can be a viable model for the people of God. In a day and time when people are suffering more than ever under the yoke of economic oppression, this model offers a ray of hope and encouragement.

We must, however, move to be more diligently in our efforts to educate the people of God about this model's biblical credence and relevance. One of the most blinding results of this project showed that, by and large, the church is failing to inform its congregations about the extent to which entrepreneurship is a part of their divine destiny. Therefore, in addition to all of the other ministries that we seek to herald as a part of God's plan for humanity, we must hold up economic development through entrepreneurship as an equally important aspect of God's divine design for his people. The necessity of this component in ministry was clearly demonstrated through this work.

Although this treatise has proven to be successful in every focus area of measurement, there were a few things that could have served to improve its efficacy. First of all, while a three-part sermon series was offered as a part of the pre-entrepreneurship conference process, a six-part sermon series would have further helped to educate the congregation as to the role of entrepreneurship within God's divine plan for humanity. In addition, a six-part sermon series would have further served to increase the number of those who will be exposed to this theological understanding. Indeed, coupling the business conference with a six-part sermon series could prove to be most advantageous.

Secondly, it would be beneficial if the project included a town hall meeting with the community in order to discuss the need for entrepreneurship within the larger communal context. The meeting should take place no more than two months prior to the initiation of the sermon series and the business entrepreneurship conference. This should serve to engage the larger community about this issue, while being able to personally inform them of the upcoming sermon series and conference.

Finally, the researcher would suggest that this project be supplemented with an additional conference and or conference phase, which would focus on further

entrepreneurial development. The goal of this project supplement should be to help interested parties acquire the necessary tools to become incorporated as an entrepreneurial entity and receive information about the funds that may be available for start-up entrepreneurial enterprises.

In conclusion, we should strive to be entrepreneurial in all of our endeavors. It is an unfortunate epitaph on the African American community that many are like Calvin in the movie, "Barbershop." In many ways, they have failed to realize the value of entrepreneurship as a means of empowerment. Fortunately, in the aforementioned movie, Calvin fought long and hard to regain his legacy of entrepreneurship. In the end, Calvin accomplished his goal and showed us as a community that we should not stop short of rediscovering our legacy of entrepreneurship. To be sure, as in the case of Calvin, we should do what is necessary to once again become entrepreneurs and fulfill our God given destiny.

Let us learn from this example and embrace this faith-based initiative for economic development and empowerment through entrepreneurship.

APPENDIX A
LETTER OF INVITATION

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church
P.O. Box 806
Amelia, Virginia 23002
804-561-6560

December 13, 2005

Dear Christian Friends:

Greetings in the name of Him who orders our steps and meets us with mercy, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are writing this letter in response to one of the needs that has been detected in our community.

It has come to our attention that the average household in Amelia County has an income that is approximately \$6,500.00 below the state average and approximately 21% or \$5,000.00 less per capita than our statewide counterpart. In light of this economic disparity, God has inspired us to begin attempting to redress this inequity that affects many of those in our community.

One of the ways that we have been led to begin our efforts to redress this economic inequity that exist in our community is by implementing an educational initiative for economic development through entrepreneurship.

To this end, we are seeking to offer a two-day entrepreneurship conference for those who are interested in becoming economically empowered through business ownership. The dates for this conference will be July 22, 2005 from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. and July 23, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.,.

We are humbly requesting that you would share this with your congregation and to please have all interested parties RSVP at least one week in advance by contacting our church office (804-561-6560), or Sis. Phyllis Brown (804-561-3645), or Sis. Sharon Edwards (804-379-9420) so that we might be prepared to accommodate their coming.

Until then, may God richly bless you and keep you, making you perfect unto every good work.

Because He lives,

Pastor H.B. Sampson, III
and the Pleasant Grove Church Family

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE FLIER

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

For Aspiring Entrepreneurs

JULY 22

7:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

And

JULY 23

10:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Place:

PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

P.O. Box 806

14201 Meade Road

AMELIA, VIRGINIA 23002

APPENDIX C
SERMON SERIES

“IN GOD’S IMAGE”

Gen. 1:1; 1: 26-27

(Theme: Entrepreneurs: Made in God’s Image)

INTRODUCTION: I have recently become the proud father of three beautiful children. What has been most amazing to me is the fact that they all have taken various traits, features, and characteristic from both me and my wife. Whether it is by way of physical features and or portraits of personality, all three of our children have characteristics that distinguish them in one way or another as being an image of their parents.

To be sure, this is as it should be for, as their parents, we have provided them with the genetic templates by which to fashion their ontological tabla rosas. Said different, they should look like us, act like us, and even see the world like us because they have come from us. In fact, I can remember that when each of these children were yet in the womb, my wife and I would take fanciful trips through the eyes of our imagination about what features we most wanted them to take from both of us. This parochial exercise of parental pleasure was afforded by the expectation that our children would in some shape, form, or fashion be a manifestation of our image.

TEXT: Just as this is the case with my children, so it is with those of us whom God has created in His image. In Gen. 1: 26a & 27, God says, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.... So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female made he them.” Thus, when God created Adam and Eve in his image, he endowed, imparted, and imprinted upon them the characteristic and qualities of his divine being. Although there are many attributes that the divine deposited within our molds of human design, we shall primarily concern ourselves with the divine characteristic of being creative entrepreneurs.

By one definition, entrepreneurs are understood to be those who are creative beings. When viewed from this perspective, God both is and was an entrepreneur. In fact, it could be said that the very act of creation was a result of God functioning as an entrepreneur. Therefore, being a creative entrepreneur was a divine attribute that God deposited into those whom he created in his image. Said differently, Adam and Eve were empowered to be creative beings, which is to say, they were created to be entrepreneurs.

As in the case of Adam and Eve, when we were created in the image of God, we were endowed with the gift of divine characteristics and qualities, one of which was the gift of being creative. This creative characteristic that God deposited into humanity was and is one of the fundamental ways by which we understand what it means to be an entrepreneur. Said differently, an entrepreneur is, by and large, one who undertakes a creative enterprise. Therefore, when God, the first entrepreneur, created us in his image and after his likeness, he endowed us with an inherent character and quality of being creative entrepreneurs.

We were created to be entrepreneurs. We were created by our creator to be creative. We were not meant to be paralyzed by paradigms of predictability. We were not created to be lost in the limitations of a routine lifestyle. We were not created to be trapped by the tentacles of entrenched traditions. We were created by our creator to be creative. We were created to be entrepreneurs.

RELEVANT QUESTION: In as much as we were created by our creator to be creative entrepreneurs, we must better ascertain what being a creative entrepreneur entails. It is in this regard that our text is most informative.

I. First of all, it entails being able to identify potential in the absence of apparent possibility. (i.e insight). Said differently, being a creative entrepreneur involves being able to see potential when and where there is apparent impossibility.

TEXT: According to text, in the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. Etc..., (Gen. 1:1-3; NRSV)

What you have to understand is that in the beginning, the earth was void and darkness covered the face of the deep. With such darkness on the face of the deep, surely the deep seemed to be equally dark. For all intents and purposes, the text is conveying to us that at this point in time there did not appear to be anything, but a deep darkness. It can be a difficult task to have vision amid a deep darkness. It can be difficult to see thing being any different amid a deep darkness. However, God was able to see things differently. He was able to have a vision that was beyond the deep darkness of apparent despair. In spite of that which appeared to be an apparent impossibility, God saw the potential of what could be and said, “Let there be.”

APPLICATION: This is the quality that God deposited in us when he created us. God, the divine entrepreneur, created us in his image with the ability to look beyond what is apparent impossibility to seeing that which has underlying possibility. He created us with the ability to look beyond the deep darkness of our despair. Oh, to be sure, at one time or another, we all know what it is to deal with the deep darkness of despair. Can I get a witness? Nevertheless, God says to us today that we don’t have to allow our vision to be destroyed by the deep darkness of our despair. You were created to look beyond the darkness and see the potential for light. Good God almighty. I wish I could just talk to you

for a little while. This is what it means to be an entrepreneur; it is to see things in a new way even when you are surrounded by a present reality. It is having a vision of light amid the darkness. It is to look beyond what seems impossible and seeing the potential of what is possible.

A. Isn't that just like faith? I hear the God saying that "faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."¹ In many ways, Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible. Oh, you had better remember "we walk by faith and not by sight." Listen, simply put, God gave us the ability to see things differently. We were created to have a sight of what has not been seen, a vision that is beyond the visible, and to have a view without preview. God gave us the ability to see things differently.

This is a word for those who seemingly always have to deal with individuals who look at a situation and instead of seeing what could be, they are always talking about what cannot be. They tend to only see problems instead of possibilities. Their conversation generally involves statement like, "you can not do it that way, you can not achieve it that way, or you can not possibly believe that it can be that way. Oh, but we who are people of faith understand that we are supposed to see things differently. We walk by faith and not by sight. So, the next time you find yourself having to deal with people who cannot see the potential because they are too busy looking at what they perceive to be the problem, you need to remind them, "I don't see it that way! I see things differently; I walk by faith and not by sight!"

¹ Hebrews 11:1

This is what it means to be an entrepreneur. It is to see the potential amid apparent problem. It is to see what can be even though others are saying what cannot be. We were created to have a new vision, a new insight, a new perspective, and a new view. We were created to see things differently. We walk by faith, and not by sight. As entrepreneurs, we were created to look beyond the problems to seeing the possibility.

This is equally relevant for the body of Christ. The church should consist of those who see things differently from the world. The church should be comprised of those who are able to see the possibilities of what can be even while being amid the problems are what other say can not be. The church should have a vision of light amid to the apparent darkness of despair. For the darkness of despair in the world, in our nation, in the chambers of our current conservative supreme court, in our current Republican controlled congress, in the caldron of our communities, the church should have a vision of light in the midst of this deep darkness. As a body of Christ, the church should a group of like-minded people who have view, “we walk by faith, and not by sight!

When there appears to be an unchanging deep darkness in our communities with high crime rate, high teenage pregnancy rates, high drug abuse rates, and high prison rates, we are called to see things differently and voice the reframe, “we walk by faith and not by sight! When there seems to be an unchanging deep darkness of political policies that punish the poor and rewards the rich we are still called to see things differently and voice the reframe, ”we walk by faith and not by sight.” When there appears to be an unchanging deep darkness of court ruling that seem to echo the intolerance of the past, we are still called to see things differently and make the reframe “ we will not go quietly into that good night; we walk by faith and not by sight!”

II. Secondly, in addition to seeing things differently, being an entrepreneur entails being able to propel that which is a possibility into that which is a reality.

TEXT: Look at the text. Throughout this creative process, after looking at what was a possibility, God said let something be and it became a reality. God said let there be light, and it was so. In verse 6 and 7, God said let the water separated form above the firmament and beneath the firmament, “and it was so.” In verse 9, God said let water separate from the dry land, “and it was so.” In verse 11, God said let the earth produce vegetation, “And it was so.” In verse 13 - 16, God said let there be a sun in the sky by day and a moon by night with the stars to shine in their sockets, “and it was so.”

What is interesting is the fact that the words “Let it be,” are closely associated with that which came into being. Prior to God’s saying, “let it be,” there was non-being. However, after God spoke the words “let it be,” non-being became being. Thus, these three words bespeak a form of divine activity that demonstrate how God moved from a vision of possibility and did what was necessary to make his vision a reality.

APPLICATION: I need you to understand that this is what God wants us to do. He wants us as entrepreneurs to move from our visions of possibility to making them a reality. God is trying to tell us today that we need to not just see what can be. Rather, we must, in the words of the text, do what is necessary to let it be. You see it is one thing to have a vision of what could be, but it is something else to do what is necessary in order to “let it be.” In short, to let it be is to move from vision into action. Where as we may have had a vision of what could be, we must do what is necessary to make it a reality.

Too many times, you will find that most people will talk about, but will not do anything about it. However, it is not just enough to dream about it, have a vision about it, think about it, and or even talk about it. We need to be about it. There are so many who

go through their lives upset about what could have been. I could have had been an entrepreneur, I could have had a business, I could have worked for myself, I could have bought the property, I could have made better investments, I could have this, I could have that. They spend the days regretting what they wanted to do and had a vision to do, but for whatever reason they failed to do. Well, I want to ask the question, “in stead of lamenting about it, crying about it, fussing about it, and even becoming bitter about it, why not be about it?”

Relationally speaking, there those who talk about how they could have been a better pastor, they could have been a better teacher, they could have been a better leader, they could have been a better father, a better mother, a better son, daughter, a better sister, and a better brother. However, instead of talking, God say we need to start being about it. We have to move from possibility to making it a reality. It is not too late. You just need to make up your mind that right here and right now I am going to make it a reality. You just need to stop talking about it and be about it!

III. Lastly, being an entrepreneur who has a creative identity entails being able to find pride in that which you have produced.

TEXT: On several occasion throughout the creation narrative, we find that after God performed an act of creation, he looked upon, examined, and evaluated what he had created and found that, “it was good.” Then, in verse 31, we find the summation of God’s sentiment regarding that which he had created. In this verse it says, “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” When God examined what he had created and saw that it was good we can gather that He was pleased with the quality of his product. If I were to translate this into modern terms, God look at what he had created and said, “It is all good!”

APPLICATION: As with God, so to it should be with us as entrepreneurs. That which we have produced and or created should be of such quality that we can take pride in what we have done. God is saying, "Like me, what you have done should be of such quality that you are proud to stand by your work and say, "it is all good." As entrepreneurs, we should be able to take pride in your product. Every business venture that we undertake should be of such that we can take pride in what we have done. It is often the case that many entrepreneurs are producing a product that is unfit for the public. However, God wants that we be the type of entrepreneurs that produce such a good product that we can take pride in what we done and the public is blessed by its consumption.

I just want to know how is your product. How is the product of your enterprise, your spirituality, your commitment, your conviction, your witness, and your testimony? Are people being blessed as a result of partaking of your life's story, your life's example, and your life's devotion or are they getting something that is inferior and substandard. Is the public being bless by your product or is it of such that is not worth a dime. I just want to know how is your product. My hope is that when you take stock of your product you will both be able to take pride in what you have done and be able to say, "it is all good!"

CONCLUSION: Well beloved, as we prepare to close this message, I want to let you know that I am glad that God created us in his image and after his likeness. He created us to be creative. He made us to be entrepreneurs. I thank God today that, by being made in his image, he shows us how to be entrepreneurs who are able to look beyond what is and see what can be. He showed us how to look beyond the problems and see the potentials. He showed us how to look beyond all of the mess and see the opportunities for a miracle. We were created to look at thing differently; instead of only

looking at things through the eyes of the flesh, we were also made to look at things through the eyes of faith. He reminds us in his word, “we walk by faith and not by sight.”

Furthermore, he tells us that we are to be the kind of people whose vision and faith are put into action. Whatever it is that God has given you a vision to do, you need to stop only dreaming about it and thinking about it and start being about it.

Finally, when we are putting our faith into action, we need to make sure that our product is a good product. When we consider the products of our lives, we should want the Lord to see our good works and say, “it is all good!”

KERYGMA: As a matter of fact, this is the reason that Jesus came. One day, God saw our sinful state, but looking beyond the sinners that we were, he saw the saints that we could become. When he looked at us, he did not just see our problems, but he saw our potential. When he looked at us, he did not just see our filth, but he saw the potential for our faith. When He looked at us, he did not just see our weakness, but he saw the potential for our strength. In spite of all our shortcomings, God saw things differently and saw what we could be. As the song writer once wrote, “He looked beyond [our] faults and saw [our] needs.”

Jesus came to make God’s vision of what we could be a reality. That is why Jesus hung, bled, and died on Calvary. He did so making God’s vision a reality. That is why he died on Calvary. That is why he lay in a grave from Friday to Saturday. He did so in order to make God’s vision a reality. That is why he got up early Sunday morning. He did so making God’s vision a reality. Thank God, he got up and made God’s vision a reality.

I thank God that Jesus came and made God’s vision a reality. He saved my soul and he made me whole. I can hear the old folks saying, “he walks with me and he talk with

me and he tells me that I am his own and the joys we shared as we tarry there, none other has ever known.

For this reason, I want to walk like Jesus walked, I want to talk like Jesus talked, and I want to live like Jesus lived. I want to produce the kind of product that God will be proud of. I want to produce the kind of product in my witness that God will be proud of. I want to produce the kind of product in my life that God will see and say, "look at his commitment; it is all good. Look at his testimony; it is all good. Look at his walk; it is all good. Look at his talk; it is all good. I want the Lord to be satisfied with me so that some glad morning when this life is over I will be able to hear his welcome voice saying it is all good; servant well done!

“TAKING CARE OF GOD’S BUSINESS”**GEN. 2:15****(Theme: Entrepreneurial Stewardship)**

INTRODUCTION: Many of us are familiar with the concept of taking care of business. In point of fact, we often spend the majority of our lives trying to do just that; take care of business. For all intents and purposes, the very act of meeting our needs and the needs of our love ones is commonly described and understood as taking care of business.

We go to work day after day as a means of taking care of business. We take the money that we have earned from our jobs and pay the bills that need to be paid because we are trying to take care of business. We pay for our children’s clothing, daycare, and when necessary child-support because we are trying to be the kind of men and women who are taking care of business. In short, the managing of one’s affairs is known as taking care of business.

As in the case of our personal lives, so to it is with regards to our understanding of business entrepreneurship. Indeed, to be a business entrepreneur is understood in part and parcel as the act of managing one’s enterprise and taking care of business. The process of providing various product for consumers, marketing, pricing, and cost of production are all various facets of entrepreneurship that are generally understood as taking care of business.

Ironically, God is not against us taking care of business. In fact, he is in favor of us taking care of business. However, he does want us to be clear on the issue of whose business it is that we are to take care of. The business that we seek to take care of, spiritually, physically, personally, and other wise, ultimately belongs to God. The Psalmist

said it this way, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein (psl. 24:1). Thus, God is the sole owner of all business enterprise.

TEXT: Nowhere are the divine rights of God’s ownership clearer than in the book of origins. In the book of Genesis, the bible states, “in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1). Get this; when God functioned as the creator and created the heavens and the earth, he started the business of this world. The act of creation itself was a business enterprise.

As the creator and originator of all things, He alone holds the eternal title and deeds on all that exist on this terrestrial sphere we call earth. From the mountains to the valley, from the oceans to the seas, from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell; it all belong to God. God owns this world of business.

This being the case, the business that we take care of is not our own, but rather it belongs to the Lord. We are merely entrepreneurial stewards. This means that all of the business that is in your care; your mind, your body, your health, your children, your spouse, your house, your very life, belongs to the Lord. It all belongs to the God. Therefore, since all of the business of the world belongs to the Lord, we should avail ourselves to the “Taking Care of God’s Business.”

It is worth mentioning that the text states that “the Lord took man and put him into the Garden of Eden . . .” What is interesting here is that the text did not say that man put himself into the Garden of Eden, but that God was the one who both took him and put him into the Garden of Eden. When we put this in context with the fact that the Garden of Eden was a manifestation of the divine business and entrepreneurship, we can gather that, by putting Adam in the Garden of Eden, God literally put him into his business.

This is what God is trying to tell someone here today. He is trying to tell you that he wants to put you into his business. I'm not giving you my business, but I am putting you into my business. To be sure, God puts us into business, but it is his business. Not our business, but God business. Not our family's business, but God's business. Not our day-to-day business, but God's business. In everything that we do, we need to be aware of the fact that we are "Taking Care of God's Business!"

RELEVANT QUESTION: Of course, this naturally begs the question, "How do we go about the process of take care of God's business? It is to the task of answering this question that we now turn our attention.

I. First of all, as entrepreneurial stewards, we do so by cultivating the business opportunities within which He has placed us.

TEXT: According to the text, as entrepreneurial stewards of God's business, God gave Adam and Eve the responsible of dressing the garden. The term used for "to dress" comes from the original Hebrew term לָבַשׁ , which means "to serve and or be a servant." Hence, when they were to dress the Garden, they were to cultivate the garden as a servant.

From this we can gather that God want us to remember that, while in his business, the most that we can ever hope to be is a servant. We are to be merely servants offering a service. This holds to be true for everyone from the pulpit to the parking lot; we are all to be servants. Yes, we may be pastors, but we are just servants. We may be deacons, but we are just servant. We may be trustees, missionaries, and pew members, but above all we are servants. In God business, this is the only position that is open and needs to be filled. I wonder if there are any servants in the house!

Someone ought to be able to say, “I may be a father, I may be a mother, I may be rich, I may be poor, I may be young and I may be old, but at the end of the day, I am just a servant. I may have a few dollar in the bank, I may have a few properties to manage, I may have a few cars to drive, I may have a few cloths to wear, I may even have a few more days to live, but do not think for a minute that I do not have a cross to bear; at the end of the day I am just a servant!

As servants, the text says that Adam and Eve where to cultivate the garden. Get this; they were to be productive in their service. This reminds me of how I feel when watching the Williams sisters playing tennis. This is especially true of Venus Williams. Most of the time, I really enjoy watching Venus play tennis, but other times it is like watching a bad wreck. What makes these particular moments so difficult to watch is the fact that, in spite of how talented she is, sometimes she really has trouble with her serve. There have been times when I have watched Venus almost loss an entire match because her serve was so bad. What I want to know today is how is your serve?” Is your serve like Venus? Is all that you have done rendered for naught because your service is so bad? Your serve should be such that it is productive. I ask you again, “how is your serve?”

God says to us today that as servants, our service should be worthwhile. I don’t know about you, but I want to be a good servant who renders good service for the master. I want to please God and cultivate every opportunity, I want to be productive in everything that I say and do. I want everything that I do to be worthwhile. I want to be a good servant! The reason that I want to be a good servant is because I know that servants get the best rewards. The master who owns the areas in which we serve is known to give the good servants his best rewards. Oh, my God! Preach! I had better leave that alone for now, but I am thankful that I know who the master is that I serve. Um!

I. Finally, as an entrepreneurial steward, God informs us that we should make sure that what we have cultivated is not lost.

TEXT: The Bible says that God put Adam in the garden to both dress and keep it. The term used for “keep” is the term “גןנו”, which means to cause a state or condition to remain. This means that when God put Adam in the Garden of Eden to keep it, He wanted Adam to make sure that what he was taking care of would last. For the purposes of this message today, God was saying, “I am going to put you into my business to take care of my business by cultivating my business, but I also want you to stay in my business.

APPLICATION: This is what God is saying to you today. He wants to put you into his business to take care of his business by cultivating his business and to stay in his business. Get this; do not just go into business, but protect the business, be productive in the business. In other words, God wants you to stay in business. It is not God’s desire that we go out of business, but rather that we stay in business. Whatever is the area of God’s business that he has put you in is an area that he wants you to be able to stay in.

I tell you today that God wants you to stay in his business. He wants you to stay in the business of the kingdom. He wants you to stay in the business of being an entrepreneur. He wants you to stay in the business of helping to meet the needs of others. He wants you to stay in the business of ministering to those who are without. He wants you to stay in the business of being a servant who seeks to provide what is needed during the times of want.

God wants us to stay in his business because he knows that the business that we do for him is a business that will last. We need only be mindful of whose business it is that we are to take care of. If you will remember whose business it is, it will last. If you remember

who the master is that you serve, the business will last. If you remember how you got into this business, it will last. If you remember why you are in this business, it will last. If you remember what the purpose of this business is, it will last. I can recall the song that said, “you may build great cathedral large and small. You may build skyscraper grand and tall. You may conquer all the failure of the past, but remember only what you do for Christ will last!”

I tell you today, God wants you to be in his business and to stay in his business. You just remember that only what you do for Christ will last. You remember that you are in this business because you were called and created to do God’s business. You just remember that you are in this business to give God the glory. You just remember that you are in this business to give God the honor. You just remember that you are in this business to give God the praise. You just remember that, whatever it is that you may do in life, only what you do for Christ will last!

CONCLUSION: God bless you today, but before I go, I want to encourage you to keep working for the Master. You be encouraged to continue taking care of God’s business. I hear somebody saying, “serving the Lord will pay off after while.” You just keep on taking care of God’s business.” I don’t know about you, but I am going to take care of God business. As a child of God, I am going to take care of God’s business. As a pastor, I am going to take care of God’s business. As an entrepreneur, I am going to take care of God’s business.

KERYGMA: I am going to take a page from the Master. I tell you, Jesus knew how to take care of God’s business. When he was born, he was taking care of God business. When he was later crucified, he was taking care of God’s business. When he died, he was taking care of God business. When he lay in the grave, he was taking care of

God business. Oh, yes. He took care of God's business from Friday afternoon until Saturday night. Lastly, early Sunday morning, he rose for the grave and when he rose from the grave he was taking care of God business!

Lastly, I want to let you know that he is still taking care of God's business. He is sitting on the right hand of the father. He is still taking care of God business making intercession for us. He is still taking care of God business by cover us. Bless God and I want you to know that he is still taking care of God business in the presence of the Holy Ghost by being with us. I tell you, he is still taking care of God business. This is what the old folks meant when they would say, "He walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me that I am his own. I thank God today that Jesus shows us how to take care of God business.

“ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A GODLY LEGACY”

Gen 15:7-18; Ex. 6:8-9

(Theme: Stewardship of God’s promise Land)

INTRODUCTION: Whether we know it or not, we all have a legacy that we impart to the generations that follow. According to Webster, a legacy is that which is “transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor . . .”² Said differently, a legacy is that which one’s predecessors deposits into the lives of future generations. With this understanding in mind, it is safe to say that we all leave some form of a legacy behind for the generations that follow.

Whether it is good, bad, or indifferent, we all have a legacy that we leave behind. From hefty life insurance to nothing more than blessed assurance, we all have a legacy that we leave behind. From families with dysfunctional dynamics to dynasties with royal diadems and didactics, we all have a legacy that we leave behind. From the contaminant of social dyslexia to the contagion of saintly euphoria, we all have a legacy that we leave behind. From toxic intellectualisms to insights of human existentialism, we all have a legacy that we leave behind.

While there are many other forms of legacies, there is one form in particular that God wants us to make sure that we leave behind to the generations that follows us. This legacy is the Godly legacy of entrepreneurship. I want you to know that God does not just want us to be entrepreneurs, but He wants the generations that follow us to be entrepreneurs. Without question, the Lord wants us to provided future generations with the Godly legacy of entrepreneurship.

² *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.*

TEXT: Our texts today afford us the privilege of this insight. In Genesis 15:7, we find that God told Abram that he brought him out of Ur in order to give him the land of Canaan, which would make Abram an entrepreneurial steward of the land. Then, in verse 18 God told Abraham, “unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: . . . (v.15).”

From these two verses we can gather that not only did God give the land to Abram so that he could be an entrepreneurial steward, but he equally intended for Abram’s descendants to function in this regard. Therefore, this means that God wanted entrepreneurial stewardship (i.e. entrepreneurship) to be a trans-generational legacy for Abraham’s descendents.

APPLICATION: Through these words to Abram, God speaks to us today. He does so by telling us that it is not only his desire for us to be entrepreneurs, but it is his desire for the generations that follow us to be entrepreneurs. For all intents and purposes, the divine is telling us that entrepreneurship is a Godly Legacy.

Of course, Abram had some trepidation as to how he was going to become the entrepreneur of this land and how his seed was going to have it as a Godly legacy. For this reason, God gave him a vision and told him all that would take place with both him and his seed in order to bring His divine plan to pass. God told him that your seed is going to be oppressed by strangers in a foreign land, but that after four hundred years they were going to be set free and become the entrepreneurs of the land as he has promised (Gen. 15:12-21).

Well, the story of Abram’s life and that of his seed unfold as God said that it would. Is not that just like God? God will do just what he says. In the book of Exodus

6:8-9, we find God preparing to bestow this legacy of entrepreneurship upon Abraham's seed, which has now become known as the children of Israel.

Here, Moses, God's deliverer, is telling the children of Israel that their time in Egypt is over and that they are now about to become the recipients of the land the Lord promised to give them as a Godly Legacy. In other words, they are told that they are about to become entrepreneurial stewards of the land that God promise to give them as a legacy. It is at this point, however, that something strange happens. The bible says that, after Moses told them all that God was about to do for them by way of giving them this Godly legacy, "they hearkened not unto Moses . . . (v.9a).

RELEVANT QUESTION: This necessarily begs the question, "why didn't the children of Israel hearken to the voice of Moses and embrace the Godly legacy of entrepreneurship that the Lord was preparing to give them? I believe that the latter portion of this verse provides us with an ample explanation in this regard.

I. According to the text, "they hearken not unto Moses for anguish of spirit . . . (v9b)" The NIV translates this portion of verse 9 as saying that "they did not listen to him because of their discouragement."

How sad it is that their hearing was impaired by their discouragement. God told them through Moses that they were going to occupy the promise land. God told them that this land was going to flow with milk and honey. In essences, God told them I am going to bless you like you have never seen me bless you before. However, the children of Israel were so discouraged that they were unable to receive the word of promise that God had spoken into their lives.

APPLICATION: This is a word for somebody here today. God is trying to tell you I am about to bless you like you have never seen me bless you before. I am about to

make you the entrepreneurial steward of the promise land. However, God does not want you to be like the children of Israel. He does not want you to allow your blessing to undergo a deferment because of your own discouragement. In other words, God is conveying that, instead of your being discouraged against his word he wants us to be encouraged by his word.

To be sure, the times will come when we are discouraged by the affairs of this life. We may be so discouraged that we are tempted to believe that all of our chances are lost and that all of our hope is gone, but it is then that the Lord wants us to be encouraged that he will do just what he said.

I am reminded of David. One day David was in a bad situation and it looked like all hope was gone, but the bible says that “David encouraged himself in the Lord.”³ This is what you have to do. When it seems as though all hope is gone and that you are at the end of your rope, you need to encourage ourselves in the Lord. You need to encourage yourself in the one who is able to anoint you when others believe that you are not worthy of an anointing. You need to encourage yourself in the one who can give you the strength to slay your giants even when others believe that your giants are too big for you to handle. You need to encourage yourself in the one who is able to keep you from dying when others believe that you are not fit for living. Like David, you need to encourage yourself in the Lord.

I do not mind telling you that I have been sent here today to help somebody to encourage themselves in the Lord. God told me to tell somebody here, “don’t be

³ I Samuel 31: 6

discouraged; be encourage because he is about to bless you like you have never seen him bless you before.”

I just wonder if there is anybody here today who wants to be blessed like they have never been blessed before. Is there anybody here today who is looking for a blessing? Is there anybody here today who is ready for their blessing? Is there anybody here today who needs a blessing? Well, God told me to tell you that your time has come. God says I am going to bring you into my promise land. I am going to give you the land that flows with milk and honey. I have given you a holy legacy, a righteous legacy, and a Godly legacy. I have given you the legacy of being an entrepreneurial steward of my land. I hear God saying that he is about to bless you like you have never seen him bless you before. And babe if God said it you can believe it. I tell you that God will do just what he said. So, do not be discouraged, be encouraged!

II. Well, this text offers us one last lesson about what tends to hinder us from receiving the word about God’s legacy of entrepreneurial stewardship in our lives. The bible says that, in addition to the children of Israel not receiving what Moses had to say because of their being discouraged, the people of Israel, “hearkened not unto Moses...[because]... of cruel bondage. (v.9c)”

What is interesting here is the fact that even though God told them that he was going to fulfill their legacy he promised them by making them entrepreneurial stewards of the promise land, they could not believe it because of their paralysis from previous pain. In spite of what God told them that he was about to do for them, they could not believe in the promise of a prosperous present due to the oppressive pains of their past.

APPLICATION: God wants us learn from the children of Israel. He wants us to know that we should not allow the pains of our past to impair us from hearing Him speak words of prosperity in our present.

To be sure, many of us, like the children of Israel, have endured hard trial and tribulation. We have suffered many pains of the past, but God does not want us to be paralyzed by the past. It is unfortunate, but true that many of us are suffering psychological paralysis as a result of previous pains. However, God is saying to us that we have to get beyond our past if we are going to prosper in our present.

This is especially relevant for us as a people. As African Americans, we have a history of having been subjected to cruel bondage. By some estimations, close to twelve million African were herded into slave ships like cattle and shipped across the Mid-Atlantic. Close to one million were lost in the Mid-Atlantic voyage, with some eleven million making to the land of their oppression. For approximately two-hundred and forty-six years we were dejected, demoralized, and dehumanized. We were, raped, beaten, tortured, and killed by cruel slave masters. However, God is saying to us as a people, "Do not allow the pain of your past to impair you from hearing the entrepreneurial legacy of prosperity in your present."

It is important that we are clear in the fact that to get beyond your past does not mean minimize or deny the past. You see there are some who would have you to believe that either the painful event did not happen or that it happened, but that it was not cruel. Well, the devil is a liar. African slavery was not some figment of our imagination and it was not some historical exaggeration. Slavery happened and it was humanly callous, corrupt, and cruel. Nevertheless, for all that it did to negatively impact us, to hobble us,

and to hurt us, God say's do not allow that pain of the past to impair you from receiving this legacy of prosperity in your present.

This is equally relevant for us in many of the other areas of our lives. Without question, you have been through some painful events in your life. Yes, you have been hurt, you have been rejected and dejected, you have been minimized, you have scandalized, you have been criticized, you have been pulverized, but for all that you have been through, do not allow the pains of your past to impair you to the your legacy of prosperity in the present.

You just remember to keep in mind that God has something better in store for you. You just keep in mind that your past is not to be compared with your prize. God has a plan for you. God has a purpose for you. God has a blessing for you with you name on it. God has a legacy for you with your name on it. As the songwriters have said, "What God has for you, it is for you." All God want you to do is to believe it and receive it. Stop allowing your hearing to be impaired by your past and hear the voice of the Lord.

CONCLUSION: In closing, I am reminded of the cell phone commercial where there is man who is going around talking to someone on his cell phone. While he is going around from place to place and talking to the person on the phone, he keeps checking his reception by asking them, "can you hear me now?" Well, God wants me to check the reception in the house today and ask you the question, "can you hear me now?" God says, "do not be discouraged, be encouraged. Can you hear me now? Do not allow your past to prevent the blessing in your present. Can you hear me now? I have given you a Godly legacy. Can you hear me now? I want you to be an entrepreneurial steward. Can you hear me now? I am going to bless you like you have never seen me bless you before. Can you hear me now? I have a blessing with you name on it. Can you hear me now? What I have

for you, it is for you. Can you hear me now? If you can believe it, you can receive it, Can you hear me now? It is time for you to take care of my business. Can you hear me now?

I tell you, God wants you prosper you. Can you hear me now? God wants to bless you. Can you hear me now? God wants to elevate you, God want to emancipate you, and God wants to liberate you. Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now? Can you hear me now? CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW!

KERYGMA: This is why Jesus came. He came to serve as the tower of salvation that cleared up our reception between heaven and earth. One day man was hard of hearing and sinned against God. Oh, but thank God that one day he sent Jesus to restore the lines of communication. Jesus came so that we could once again hear and be heard by God.

I tell you today, God loves us. As a matter of fact, he loves us so much that he sent his son to die for us. Oh yes, he died. Can you hear me now? He lay in the grave, but early Sunday morning, he rose with all power in his hands. I just wonder can you hear me now. Right now, Jesus is the source of my salvation, he is the source of my regeneration, he is the source of my restoration; can you hear me now! I thank God that right now I can hear him and he hears me. I heard the songwriter saying, "I love the Lord, he heard my cry and pitied my every groan; long as I live while troubles rise, I'll hasten to his throne. I just wonder is there anybody here today who can hear me now!

APPENDIX D
ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERMON SERIES PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERMON SERIES

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Directions: Please provide the personal information listed below by circling the appropriate response.

Sex: Male Female

Marital Status: Single Married Divorced

Age: 3 - 12 35 - 50
 13 - 19 51 - 64
 20 - 34 65 and above

Ethnicity: Black White Hispanic Asian Other

Income Range: 0 - 15,000 25,000 - 50,000
 15,000 - 25,000 50,000 - 100,000

THEOLOGICAL VIEWS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Directions: Below you will find a list of statements followed by a scale from one to five where 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. After reading each statement, please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. We were created by God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. We were created in the image God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. God wants us to be entrepreneurs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I want to be an owner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The word of God does not teach about entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. The Bible teaches us to be stewards over what God has created	1	2	3	4	5
7. Entrepreneurship is not the same as Stewardship	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have received teaching in the past about being a business entrepreneur from a Biblical perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The Bible teaches about entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
10. Jesus was concerned about ministry and not entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
11. Being an entrepreneur is not consistent with God's ministry.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Jesus Christ was an entrepreneur	1	2	3	4	5
13. The body of Christ is suppose to be an organization that promotes positive change	1	2	3	4	5
14. The church should be more concerned with the spiritual needs of its congregation than with the physical needs.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The church should help those who are economically suffering in its community	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E
ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERMON SERIES POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERMON SERIES

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Directions: Please provide the personal information listed below by circling the appropriate response.

Sex: Male Female

Marital Status: Single Married Divorced

Age: 3 - 12 35 - 50
 13 - 19 51 - 64
 20 - 34 65 and above

Ethnicity: Black White Hispanic Asian Other

Income Range: 0 - 15,000 25,000 - 50,000
 15,000 - 25,000 50,000 - 100,000

THEOLOGICAL VIEWS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Directions: Below you will find a list of statements followed by a scale from one to five where 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. After reading each statement, please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. We were created by God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. We were created in the image God | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. God wants us to be entrepreneurs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I want to be an owner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The word of God does not teach about entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. The Bible teaches us to be stewards over what God has created	1	2	3	4	5
7. Entrepreneurship is not the same as Stewardship	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have received teaching in the past about being a business entrepreneur from a Biblical perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The Bible teaches about entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
10. Jesus was concerned about ministry and not entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
11. Being an entrepreneur is not consistent with God's ministry.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Jesus Christ was an entrepreneur	1	2	3	4	5
13. The body of Christ is suppose to be an organization that promotes positive change	1	2	3	4	5
14. The church should be more concerned with the spiritual needs of its congregation than with the physical needs.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The church should help those who are economically suffering in its community	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F
REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION FORM

DATE:

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

Name: _____

Denomination of Faith _____

APPENDIX G
BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Directions: Please provide the personal information listed below by circling the appropriate response.

Sex:	Male	Female			
Marital Status:	Single	Married	Divorced		
Age:	3 - 12	35 - 50			
	13 - 19	51 - 64			
	20 - 34	65 and above			
Ethnicity:	Black	White	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Income Range:	0 - 15,000	25,000 - 50,000			
	15,000 - 25,000	50,000 - 100,000			

THEOLOGICAL VIEWS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Directions: Below you will find a list of statements followed by a scale from one to five where 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. After reading each statement, please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

1. God wants us to be entrepreneurs	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Bible teaches us to be stewards over what God has created	1	2	3	4	5
3. Entrepreneurship is a form of stewardship	2	3	4	5	
4. Entrepreneurship is not a form of stewardship	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have received teaching in the past about being a business entrepreneur from a Biblical perspective.	1	2	3	4	5

GENERAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. To be an entrepreneur is the same as being a business owner. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Entrepreneurship is an act of service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Being a business entrepreneur is not a top priority in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. If I become a business entrepreneur, my economic well-being and freedom will improve | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

THE EFFECTS OF SLAVERY and SEGREGATION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Slavery was primarily an economic issue | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Economically, African American have been negatively impacted by Slavery | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Segregation did not play any significant role in African American Entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Integration did not affect African American entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Integration decreased African American Entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

GENERAL VIEWS OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a relationship between entrepreneurship and economic freedom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Stewardship is a form of economic liberation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX H

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE POST- QUESTIONNAIRE

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Directions: Please provide the personal information listed below by circling the appropriate response.

Sex:	Male	Female			
Marital Status:	Single	Married	Divorced		
Age:	3 - 12	35 - 50			
	13 - 19	51 - 64			
	20 - 34	65 and above			
Ethnicity:	Black	White	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Income Range:	0 - 15,000	25,000 - 50,000			
	15,000 - 25,000	50,000 - 100,000			

THEOLOGICAL VIEWS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Directions: Below you will find a list of statements followed by a scale from one to five where 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. After reading each statement, please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. God wants us to be entrepreneurs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The Bible teaches us to be stewards
over what God has created | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Entrepreneurship is a form of stewardship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Entrepreneurship is not a form of stewardship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I have received teaching in the past about
being a business entrepreneur from a
Biblical perspective. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

GENERAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1. To be an entrepreneur is the same as being 1
a business owner. | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Entrepreneurship is an act of service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 3. Being a business entrepreneur is not a
top priority in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |

BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. If I become a business entrepreneur, my
economic well-being and freedom will improve | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

THE EFFECTS OF SLAVERY and SEGREGATION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Slavery was primarily an economic issue | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Economically, African American have been
negatively impacted by Slavery | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Segregation did not play any significant role in
African American Entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Integration did not affect African American
entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Integration decreased African American
Entrepreneurship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

GENERAL VIEWS OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a relationship between entrepreneurship
and economic freedom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Stewardship is a form of economic liberation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX I
FRIDAY NIGHT'S LECTURE OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION:

I. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Economic Theory of Economic Development through the Self-Reliance and Self-Sufficiency of Entrepreneurship

- Booker T. Washington
- W.E.B. Dubois
- Martin Luther King, Jr
- Critic of self-sufficiency: E. Franklin Frazier
 - Economic development through entrepreneurship as Social Myth

"this social myth has been one of the main elements in the world of 'make-believe' which the black bourgeoisie has created to compensate for its feelings of inferiority in a white world dominated by business enterprise."¹

- Alternative view for self-sufficiencies failures/ shortcomings: John Butler

The Economic Detour. "The idea [of an] economic detour is that Afro-Americans, especially in the period following the Civil War, were restricted by law from operating their business enterprises in an open market."²

- i.e. Segregation and Jim Crow

The Black Church and Entrepreneurship

- During Slavery
- Modern Day

Entrepreneurship: Defined

- **Rev. Kerbyjon Caldwell** in *Entrepreneurial Faith*, entrepreneurs are defined as those "who see, evaluate, and respond to opportunities for God . . . [by] launch [ing] initiatives that respond to real needs, takes advantage of opportunities that fit the vision that God gives, creates services that

¹ E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1957), 129.

² John Sibley Butler, *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 77.

meet real needs, and - most importantly - affects lives that are destined for eternity.“³

- To this definition, **Michael Gerber** states that an entrepreneur is a creative visionary who seizes opportunities.⁴
- To both of these definitions, the author would add that an entrepreneur is one who is a steward of God's creative work. This particular definition is both rooted in and drawn from Genesis 2:15
 - i.e. Entrepreneurial Stewards

II. BIBILICAL FOUNDATION

Entrepreneurial Stewards

- **Old Testament**
 - God as owner - Lev. 25: 23; Psl. 24:1
 - Man as entrepreneurial steward - Gen. 2:15, 15:18
Exodus 6: 1-5,8
II Chr. 17:13
 - Entrepreneurial Restrictions - Lev. 25: 13-17
Neh. 5: 1ff.
- **New Testament**
 - Entrepreneurial stewards - Lk. 4:16-19, 5: 1-11, 18: 28ff
 - Entrepreneurial Restrictions - Lk 4: 16-19, 6:31;Mt. 18: 23-34
Col. 4:1, Eph. 6:9

III. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

- **Creation: God as an Entrepreneur**
 - Ex Nihilo – Out of nothing : The act of creation as an act of entrepreneurship
- **Image of God**
 - Imago Dei – Man as the image of God being an entrepreneur

³ Kerbyjon Caldwell and Walt Kallestad, *Entrepreneurial Faith: Launching Bold Initiatives To Expand God's Kingdom* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2004), 41.

⁴ Michael E. Gerber, *The E Myth: Revisiting Why Small Business Don't Work and What To Do About It* (New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 2001), 23f.

- The Fall: God Blind
 - The effects of Sin; in particular with reference to the lost vision of entrepreneurship
- Christology: Restored Vision
 - The vision of entrepreneurship restored
- Ecclesiological Vision

IV. HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

- European Entrepreneurship: Feudalism
- African Entrepreneurship: Pre-Colonial
- American Slavery
- Reconstruction
 - The Black Church :
 - An Educational Model
 - Self-Sufficiency/Reliance Model
 - The purchase of Land
 - Thaddeus Stevens: 40 Acres and a mule
 - Fredrick Douglass
- Post-Restruction
 - Paragon of Entrepreneurial Enterprise
 - Booker T. Washington
 - W.E.B.Dubois
 - Marcus Garvey
 - Madam C.J.Walker
 - Maggie Walker
- The Second Reconstruction
 - Malcolm X
 - Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.

APPENDIX J
DR. EDLOE'S BIOGRAPHY

Leonard L. Edloe is a pharmacist and C.E.O of Edloe's Prof. Pharmacies, a chain of local pharmacies, and Pastor of the Antioch Baptist Church, Susan, Virginia. He is a native of Richmond and a graduate of Armstrong High School, the Howard University School of Pharmacy, the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, and the University of Florida School of Pharmacy. He serves as an Assistant Clinical Professor of Pharmacy at the Hampton University School of Pharmacy and the MCV-VCU School of Pharmacy, and a Clinical Instructor of Pharmacy at the Howard University School of Pharmacy. He also was the Executive-In-Residence at the Longwood University College of Business and Economics for the school year 2004-2005.

Dr. Edloe has been active in many community and national organizations. He has served as President of the Church Hill Model Cities Program, President of the Richmond Urban League, Chairman of the Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chairman of Main St 25 Inc, Chairman of the Board of Health for the City of Richmond and he was the first black chairman of the board of the Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond. Having a passion for better health, he serves on the board of the Richmond Memorial Foundation, the American Heart Association, the VCU Health System Authority and the National Kidney Foundation of the Virginias. He also has the distinction of being the youngest pharmacist ever elected to the Board of Trustees of the American Pharmaceutical Association. He is a 33rd Degree Mason and served as the Worshipful Grand Chaplain of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of Virginia.

Rev. Edloe is the recipient of many awards, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in Medicine and Health Care, Distinguished Retail of the Year, Virginia's Retailer of the Year, Dominion's Strong Men; just to list a few, and is married to the former Serita Hamilton of Dawn, Virginia. They reside in Mechanicsville and Cobbs Creek, Virginia and he is the father of one daughter, Leonard Lenisse.

APPENDIX K
DR. EDLOE'S LECTURE OUTLINE

Economic Development Seminar.

Presented by Leonard L. Edloe, M.Div., Pharm. D.

Historical Facts

Black wealth in 1862

Black wealth in 2004

Blacks working for other people in 1862

Blacks working for other people in 2004

Theological thinking and Biblical Interpretation

Has our theology held us back?

Is the Bible being misinterpreted to hold us back?

Are our concept of God and the depictions of Jesus holding us back?

The tax system

Set up for people who own their own homes

Set up for people who are in business.

A look at black economic spending.

We are the eighth largest economy in the world.

What are we spending our money on?

Things we should do if we want to enter business

Get our credit straight.

Save some money

Find something we like to do.

Find out if there is a market.

Take the necessary courses in community college or college

Attend business seminars

Work for and learn from someone already in that business.

Make a commitment to be in business and do it right.

Things that the church can do.

Hold seminars like these

Support those who go in business.

Establish a seed money fund for members of church

Help build black esteem and remove the belief that we cannot do business with each other

Personal things about my business

Started by my father

Now the largest black owned chain of pharmacies in America.

The difficulties and joys of owning your own business.

Entrepreneurial activities Antioch Baptist Church, Susan, Virginia

Getting out of debt seminars

Church has its own Low Power FM Radio Station

Church Business Directory

One member of Church has started Lawn Care Business with help of Pastor.

Business plan is being developed for members to start restaurant.

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